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A
HISTORY
OF
RHODE ISLAND FERRIES
1640-1923

by
ANNA AUGUSTA
and
CHARLES V. CHAPIN

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Owing to the cost of printing notes, the many hundred references to the sources of the information contained in this book have been omitted, but may be consulted in a manuscript copy deposited with the Rhode Island Historical Society at Providence, R. I. There is also contained in the manuscript a considerable number of tables of rates of ferriage.

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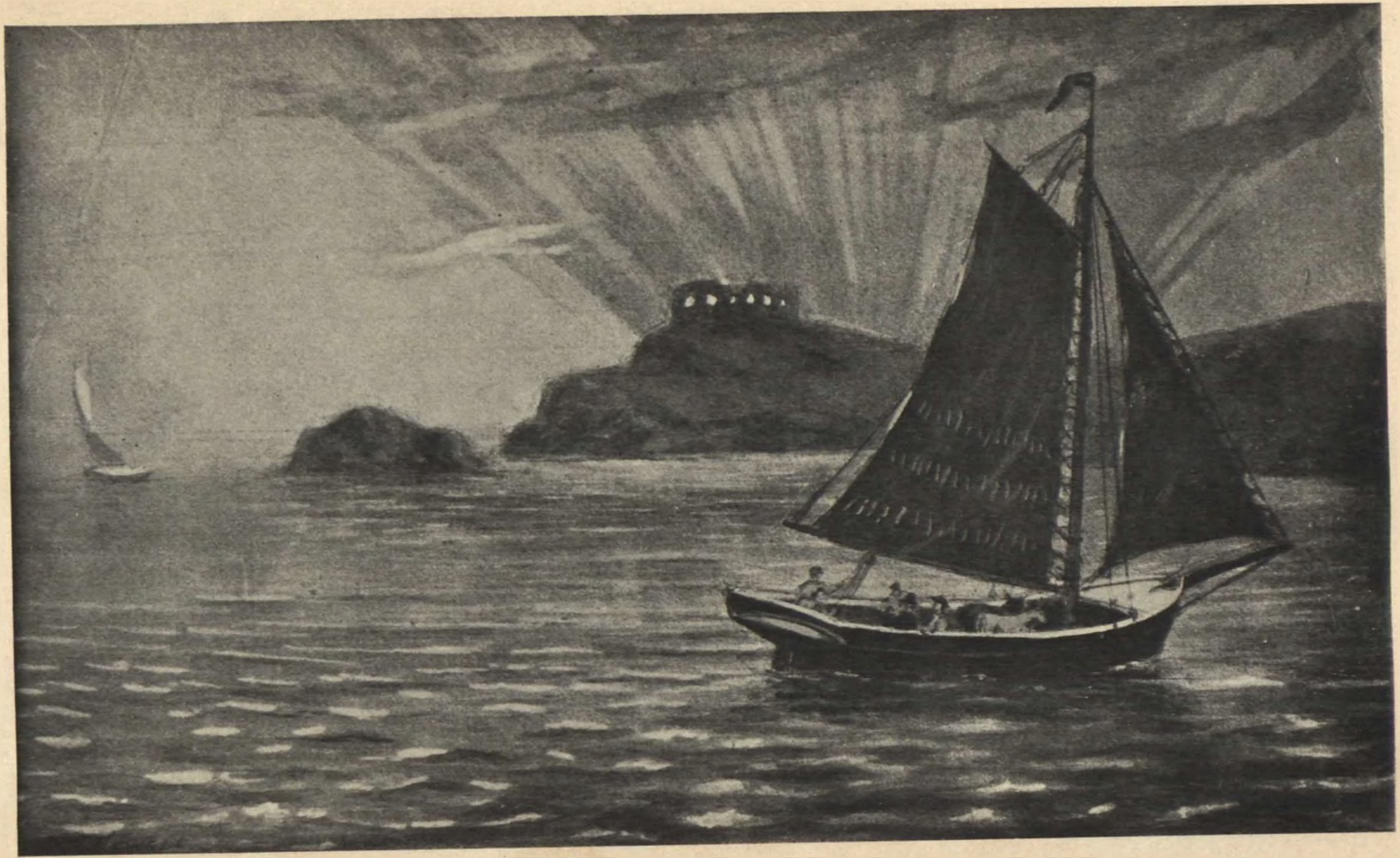


Ferry-boat which belonged to Samuel Carr of Newport and was sailed by Capt. Timothy Peckham, about 1840. From a painting in possession of Capt. Peckham's niece, Mrs. Job S. Ellis. Plate loaned by the Rhode Island Historical Society.

PART I

A General Account of Ferries

What is a ferry? It is difficult to make a definition which will fit all cases and satisfy all persons. There are routes of water travel concerning which there may be reasonable differences of opinion. Some, doubtless, will question our list of Rhode Island ferries. One person may think that the Wickford-Newport Steamboat line is not a ferry. Another may think that the former steamboat route between Narragansett Pier and Newport should be included in the list of ferries. Probably most would agree that the steamer New Shoreham, which, for so many years, has run back and forth to Block Island is not a ferry-boat. Fortunately there can be little difference of opinion about most of the ferries which will be considered in the following pages, for they are thus designated in the laws of colony and state. It is safe to say that there have been not far from thirty licensed ferries during the history of the state and, at about the middle of the eighteenth century, there were at least fifteen in operation at one time, using the word "ferry" in its present day meaning.

Probably the most important conception of a ferry is that it is part of a highway. "A ferry is, by law, considered a part of a public passage, or highway, when ever a river, or other water, is to be passed in boats" is the definition given by James S. Austin, attorney general of the State of Massachusetts, in "An Exposition on the Rights of the Commonwealth to the Ferries in the Harbor of Boston." This was an opinion given to the general court in 1833. This idea that a ferry is a water highway is the basis of much of the legislation concerning these public utilities, and of the attitude of the public towards them. The recent movement to secure operation of the ferries on each side of Conanicut Island by the state, as a part of its highway system, is a recognition of this old principle. As a corollary of this definition of a ferry the Rhode Island supreme court has determined that a ferry goes only to the water's edge and an open space between the termination of the highway and the water's edge cannot be presumed to go by the name of a ferry. There are certain other ill-defined ideas which influence our conception of what a ferry is. Thus the longer the route, the less likely is it to be thought a ferry. So too, we think of a ferry-boat as making frequent trips, not once a day, or once a week. There is perhaps, also a certain idea of business associated with a ferry, for, boats used chiefly to transport pleasure seekers back and forth to seaside resorts, are not usually thought of as ferry-boats, but as excursion boats.

Opposite Sides of a Ferry

Where, as frequently happened, the opposite sides of a ferry were owned, or controlled, by different persons and operated under different leases, the colonial law recognized two ferries. Thus the statutes referred to the ferry from Newport to Jamestown and the ferry from Jamestown to Newport. Bristol Ferry was the ferry from Bristol to Portsmouth, while, at one time, there were two ferries from Portsmouth to Bristol, all three using the same wharf on the Bristol side. Boats belonging on the opposite sides of the same passage were called "mate boats." According to the modern conception, however, a ferry is the passage over the water between two places, without reference to whether one, or more, franchises have been granted.

The fact that the opposite sides of the ferry were reckoned different ferries and were often operated by different persons led, at times, to much inconvenience to the travelers, annoyance to the owners of the ferries and to political intrigue and legislative discussion. On 29 February, 1747, Stephen Wilcox, who then operated the North Ferry in North Kingstown, and Nicholas Northup, the owner of the ferry, both complained about the action of John Martin, the owner of the opposite ferry from Jamestown to North Kingstown. Wilcox alleged that Martin's boat did not come to his wharf for twenty days together, which forced people to come back over the South Kingstown Ferry with their boxes on their backs, through snow and ice and over many high walls and near three miles, before they came to their horses. Martin preferred to run his ferry-boat over to the South Ferry landing as it was a shorter distance and as the return traffic was undoubtedly greater. He evidently wished to break up the North Ferry altogether, for he threatened to cut the fastening of Wilcox's boat if it came to his wharf and to haul up his ferry-boat and not tend any more. Wilcox said that it was a great hardship for him to tend both sides and for Martin to take the ferry money. He also said that Martin charged exorbitant rates, sometimes four shillings for a lone footman in the daytime and in good weather.

Somewhat similar trouble occurred in Newport about twenty years later. At that time there were three ferries from Newport to Jamestown and three from Jamestown to Newport. Benjamin Ellery owned The Point Ferry in Newport, which had been in his family since 1730, and on 17 June, 1768, he petitioned the general assembly, alleging that Oliver Hazard, then in possession of the last ferry granted at Jamestown, had, by the contrivance of the other ferries between Newport and Jamestown, been shifted from one to the other and at length left to tend against The Point Ferry, although his ferry was originally set up to tend against the Long Wharf Ferry.

He alleged that he was thus forced from his own proper partner, who gave good attendance, to tend against Oliver Hazard, who does not tend his ferry properly. Ellery desired that William Martin, then the proprietor of the ferry at Jamestown who was first appointed to tend against The Point Ferry, be again ordered to do so, otherwise Ellery would be obliged to give up his ferry.

English Law

The management of ferries was based largely on English precedents and English common law. In the twenty-third year of Elizabeth, court decisions declared that every ferry ought to have an expert and able ferryman, and to have present passage and reasonable payment for the passages. And it is requisite to have one who has property in the ferry, and not to allow every fisherman to carry and recarry at his pleasure, for divers inconveniences. The land on both sides of the water ought to be to the owner of the ferry, or otherwise he cannot land on the other part * * *. A ferryman, if it be on salt water ought to be privileged from being pressed to serve upon the sea. Later decisions affirm that a ferryman cannot suppress a ferry and put up a bridge without permission. If a man accepts a ferry it is necessary that he maintain a boat for the accommodation of passengers.

Ferries a Necessity for the Colonists

As the early settlements within the present confines of the state were on islands, or upon the shores of the bay, or on the banks of navigable rivers, ferries, almost at once, became a necessity. The town of Portsmouth, in 1640, about two years after its settlement, appointed a ferryman at what is now Stone Bridge. The ferry at India Point in Providence was probably established in 1664, and ferries were in operation at Lonsdale and at Bristol Ferry before King Philip's war in 1675.

These colonial ferries, though simple affairs, were of the greatest importance in those days. Many of the great problems of transportation which have been agitating the minds of business men, economists and politicians, during the last fifty years, were, in much the same form, live issues in relation to ferries during the colonial period and the Revolution.

In the very earliest times the town or colony often had some difficulty in securing a ferryman, just as inducements were sometimes necessary to secure a physician, or a blacksmith, for the community. Sometimes land was given to the ferryman, as to Thomas Gorton in Portsmouth in 1642 and to Andrew Edmonds in Providence in 1679 and to the keeper of the Swansea ferry in 1681-2. In 1647 there was trouble with Thomas Gorton and the town council of Portsmouth was ordered to "Capittulate" with him, and if it could not reach an agreement with him, to give the ferry to some other man.

In 1667 the people of Plymouth colony desired to have a ferry of their own so as not to be dependent upon the Rhode Island ferry for transportation to that Island. A committee of Dartmouth men was appointed to see that the ferry was established. Apparently nothing was accomplished, for, in 1669, Ralph Allen was given the privilege of purchasing a hundred acres from the Indians if he would keep the ferry. In 1679 John Simmons was granted liberty to build a house, on condition he keep a ferry, and after King Philip's war, he was given twenty acres of land and allowed to keep a house of entertainment. This latter privilege was another inducement which was given many of the early ferrymen to enter the ferrying business.

LATER COMPETITION DEVELOPED

As the country became settled and business increased, competition developed. In 1696 Nathaniel Toogood tried, by taking advantage of a change in the law, to get the Swansea Ferry away from Mr. Ingraham's son. Before the end of the seventeenth century there were two ferries between Portsmouth and Bristol and by 1727 the inhabitants of the former town insisted that this competition was necessary. Job Almy had operated Fogland Ferry but a dozen years before his neighbor and cousin, William Almy, asked and received a license for another ferry in 1715. In 1725 a second ferry from Newport to Jamestown was established at The Point, and, a few years later, in 1745, the proprietors of Long Wharf also asked for a ferry franchise. Probably at about the same time that The Point Ferry was established there were two ferries from Jamestown to Newport and several times David Green tried to get a franchise for another. Before 1736 there were two ferries from Jamestown to Narragansett. In 1747-8 John Gardner obtained the franchise for a competing line, but shortly afterwards, owing to the depreciation of the currency, these ferries became unprofitable and the colony had to purchase those between Jamestown and Narragansett in order to secure better accommodation for travel.

Ferry Franchises

Various ways of dealing with the ferries were in vogue at different times. At first an exclusive franchise was granted for the purpose of encouraging the setting up of the ferry. Later, when the ferries became more prosperous, the franchise was used as a means of government control. Thus, in 1712, a competing ferry at Narragansett was licensed as a punishment because the Smiths were not managing their ferry in a satisfactory manner. In 1725 a license was granted to David Green for a ferry from Jamestown to Narragansett because Benedict Arnold, the owner of the old ferry, had treated the general assembly "contemptuously." In 1747-8 a license was given to John Gardner for a ferry from Narragansett to Jamestown because the existing ferries were unsatisfactory. For the most part the ferries of the colony and state have been under leases, charters, or franchises. There were, however, occasions when some of the ferries were operated without any franchise. In all probability this was true of the first Weybosset Ferry, Pawtucket Ferry, the early Newport-Jamestown-Narragansett Ferries, the ferries across Providence River during the early nineteenth century and the present ferries from Pawtuxet to East Providence.

Government Ownership

Failure to increase the rates of ferriage, during the rapid inflation of the currency in the eighteenth century, caused endless trouble and led to the purchase by the colony, in 1748, of the two ferries between Jamestown and Narragansett. At first the government operated the ferries, hiring a man to run the boats. After two years an attempt was made to lease the ferries, but this proved unsuccessful and in 1750 the ferries were sold. After the destruction of the Great Bridge in Providence by the September Gale of 1815, the town operated a ferry while the new bridge was under construction. The most extensive experiment in municipal ownership is the ferry between Jamestown and Newport. When the present ferry company was organized, in 1872, the town of Jamestown subscribed for sixty percent of the capital stock and a committee, elected by the town meeting, has continued to manage the ferry until the present time. Now, in 1923, a committee appointed by the general assembly is considering the advisability of the state procuring and operating these ferries as a part of the state highway system. The city of Newport subscribed for $50,000 of the stock of the Newport and Wickford Railroad and Steamboat Company.

During the exigencies of the Revolutionary War government aid was given to the ferry between Jamestown and Kingstown and to the ferries on the road from Providence to the island of Rhode Island.

Control by Colony or Town

There seems to have been some uncertainty, at first, in the New England Colonies, as to whether the control of ferries was an affair of the towns, or of the colony. In Rhode Island, as might have been expected, the towns assumed this control. The first act of the general assembly indicating its intention to control ferries, of which we have any record, was in 1690, though it is not improbable that there may have been earlier acts which have been lost. This act provided that post riders and all colony officers should be carried over the ferries free. Meanwhile, so early as 7 September, 1640, the town of Portsmouth had chosen Thomas Gorton ferryman and fixed the rates of ferriage. The town made further provisions in regard to this ferry in 1642, 1647 and 1669. In 1678-9 the town of Providence voted two acres of land to Andrew Edmonds, "he intending the keeping of a Ferry he saith." No mention is made of a license either from the town or the colony.

The first recorded act of the general assembly granting a ferry franchise was 7 May, 1696, when it was voted that "Mary Edmonds of said Providence, relict of Andrew Edmonds, shall have the benefit and profit of the said ferry between Providence and Rehoboth, so far forth as this Assembly is capable to invest her, and no person shall within the precincts of this colony, deprive her thereof till further order."

There may have been some general act, or resolution, affirming the right of the colony to grant exclusive franchises for ferries and providing for the manner in which they were to be granted, but the colony records are far from perfect, and such legislation has not come to light. That such legislation did not exist seems probable from the following report. In 1727, when the citizens of Portsmouth complained because the general assembly had conferred an exclusive franchise on John Borden for the ferry to Bristol, the town appointed a committee to examine into the authority of the assembly and it reported that it found no legislation reserving such authority to the assembly, but that the assembly had, for upwards of twenty-nine years, leased the ferries, from time to time, as it saw fit and the committee did not believe that the town could regain control. From 1696 on, it seems to have been the plan for the general assembly to establish, or, "state" each ferry, and to elect, from time to time, legislative committees to attend to the details of the leases. As we shall see, a considerable amount of legislation was enacted to regulate the ferries and the conduct of the ferrymen.

The general assembly, in the act of May, 1699, implies the existence of unlicensed ferries and threatens that, if the law is not obeyed, the assembly will be obliged to license them.

FERRY LEASES

There is no record, however, of the election of a ferry committee until 5 May, 1702, when it was enacted "that Capt. Joseph Sheffield and Mr. John Holmes, shall, by virtue hereof, have full power to lease all and every the ferrys, in this colony, that are not by law already leased, and to receive of and from all and every such person all arrearages and dues that have become due from them for the aforesaid ferries any time heretofore." The committee, or any one of them, was authorized to sue for any sum due the colony for the privilege of keeping a ferry. As will be shown, such committees were hereafter elected from time to time by the assembly. They were usually directed to lease the ferries for a term not to exceed seven years, and to offer the ferries first, to those who, at the time, held the leases, "but upon their refusal, to such other proper persons as shall lay themselves under obligation to qualify themselves for, and to perform the business." The duration of the ferry leases was made four years in August, 1756. Seven years was also a common limit, as in the grant by Massachusetts of the Pawtucket Ferry in 1710 and Humphrey's Ferry in 1712, but, in 1747, as shown below, it was three years. On the other hand, sometimes no limit was fixed, as at Watchemoket in 1738, and at Warwick in 1724. In 1726 the committee was to lease the ferries to those best provided with a boat, wharf and pier, for the country's conveniency.

Some half dozen of the original leases granted by the committee in 1747 are preserved at the State House. The following is a copy of one of them:—

"This Indenture of Lease made the ninth day of September in the twenty first year of his Majesty's Reighn George the Second King of Great Britain Anno Domino 1747. Between Nicholas Carr, James Sheffield & Thomas Cranston all of Newport & the County of Newport in the Colony of Rhode Island & Providence Plantations in New England Gentlemen, a Committee Appointed by the General Assembly at their Sessions began and held at Newport within & for the Colony of R. I. by adjournment the last Monday of August in this present year 1747 for Leasing out all the Ferries within said Colony for Terms not exceeding seven years of the One part and Wm. Ellery of Newport aforesaid Esq. Of the Other part Witnessth That the said Nicholas Carr, James Sheffield and Thomas Cranston Committee men as aforesaid by force and Virtue of the Authority given to them by the said General Assembly Do by these presents Grant Demise Lease Let and to farm let unto the said Wm. Ellery his Heirs Exeutrs. Adminrs. and Assigns the Sole Transportation & Priviledge of Carrying for hire and profit all such persons creatures Goods & Things which shall at all Times from the Date hereof for & during the Term of Three years next ensuing be presented to be Transported over the Ferry from his the said Wm. Ellery's Wharf or Peer at the Point in Newport aforesaid to Jamestown For and in Consideration That the said Wm. Ellery his Heirs Executors Adminrs. or Assigns shall fulfill observe & perform the Conditions herein after mentioned.

"That is to say The said Wm. Ellery his Heirs Executors Adminrs. or Assigns shall at all Times during said Term of Three years keep and maintain a good and sufficient Boat well fitted and Suitable for said Ferry with a good Convenient Peer or Wharf continually kept in good Repair to take off all such Persons Creatures Goods Things as shall within said Term present to be transported over the Ferry and them Convey over said Ferry at the following Rates Viz. For every person twelve pence for every Horse twelve pence for all Neat Cattle two shillings per head for every Sheep Calf or Swine four pence and For every Horse & Chair or Chaise Eight Shillings and if at any Time the Boat shall put off to carry any single Footman over the Ferry he shall pay double Ferriage and the Post Riders shall be Transported over sd Ferry Ferriage Free And the Ferryman shall give due attendance for Carrying of Passengers from the Hours of five in the morning till eight at Night from the Tenth of March to the Tenth of September and the Remaining Part of the year from Six in the morning to seven at night at the before mentioned Rates and no Passenger or his Horse shall be hindered or Delayed going over the Ferry by Reason of Droves of any sort of Creatures and all Physicians Surgeons Midwives and Persons going to fetch Physicians Surgeons Midwives shall be transported over said Ferry at any Time of the Night (The Boats to pass at all the above mentioned Times Provided the weather permits & not otherwise) And no Ferriage shall be taken of Persons going over said Ferry to or returning from Market for Transporting their Baggs & Packs or Tubbs That is to say such & so many as they carry on a single Horse or carry in their own persons afoot And for the true and faithful performance of this present Lease and every Clause & Article therein contained According to the true Intent & wording thereof the Parties to the presents have Interchangably Set their hands and Seals the Day and Year first Above written.

Seal

Willm Ellery

Sign'd Seald & Delivered
in the presence of us

The word seven was rased out 8
the Word three put in before signing & sealeing—
David Green
David Greene Junior"

For drawing these leases the committee received £1 for each lease.

For a hundred years committees were, from time to time, elected to lease the ferries, but it does not appear that they were specifically required to maintain supervision over them, unless such was implied in their authority to recover the bond for violation of the lease. In 1798 it was enacted that a committee should be annually "appointed" in May, as other state officers are, whose duty it shall be to report at the May and October sessions of the general assembly and all such penalties as they shall report, to have become forfeit to the use of the state, shall be prosecuted, sued for, and recovered by action of debt by the general treasurer. It was provided by the Revised Statutes of 1857 that the three inspectors of ferries should be elected annually at the May session of the general assembly in grand committee and should make an annual report on the condition of the ferries.

Exclusive Franchise

Although the acts establishing the ferry at Narrow Passage, Providence, and that from Portsmouth to Bristol, imply that the ferry privilege was an exclusive franchise, it was stated still more clearly in the act giving to Josiah Arnold the ferry privilege between Conanicut and Narragansett. It was provided "that no person shall by this Act prejudice the said Arnold in his employ as aforesaid, by keeping a publick Ferry". Undoubtedly, so long as licensed ferries existed, that is up to about thirty-five years ago, the principle prevailed that the ferry licenses were exclusive franchises and it was so stated, or implied, in the acts establishing them, or in the terms, or condition, of the leases. By exclusive, however, it was merely meant that no one could carry passengers except the licensed ferryman. The legislature retained the right to grant another franchise at the same place. Thus, when a second ferry was established between Bristol and Portsmouth, it was affirmed that the first ferry had not been leased to one person solely, any law, or custom, or usage, to the contrary. It happened that, in three or four locations, a second, or even a third ferry, was "stated," that is, established, by the general assembly, but no one was permitted to operate a ferry without a license, or lease, as it was often called. This provision was not incorporated into a general act until 1747, when it was enacted that, if any one sets up a ferry where there are ferries already set up, without a license, he shall forfeit and pay as a fine £100. The exclusive character of these franchises was still further insisted upon in the ferry act of 1798 which provided that the proprietors of the ferries were "vested with the exclusive right and privilege of conveying and transporting passengers, horses, neat cattle, and all other freight across their respective ferries". It was further provided "that no person shall transport passengers or freight across either of the said ferries, except the proprietors thereof, or their agents, or take off, or land the same, at, or from, either of the said ferry wharves, except as before provided, under the penalty of fifty dollars". Plymouth Colony even went so far as to provide, in 1677, in the case of the ferry from Pocasset to Rhode Island, for the confiscation of the illegal ferry-boat.

Still earlier, in 1647, when John Sanford was given the franchise of the ferry from Rhode Island to Pocasset, it was voted by the town "that if any man carry any cattell over the watter to the mattatuthes bay over the ferry they shall pay a peny a head every head soe carryed over to any place that way:" Presumably this was a tax, or fine, placed on those who carried cattle in their own boats.

In the eighteenth century, when so many men were mariners, or farmers living upon the shores of the bay, and many of them the owners of small craft, it was doubtless galling to them that they were debarred from earning an honest penny, by transporting their friends and neighbors and, when occasion offered, carrying strangers, also, across the bay. Without doubt the ferry owners objected to this, and even questioned the right of people to transport themselves and their own goods. As an outcome of the exclusive franchise granted to Josiah Arnold, the latter was summoned before the town council of Jamestown, 20 March, 1701-2, and was asked whether he considered that his ferry license would debar the inhabitants of their old privilege and they be forced to come down to his house. He said, "No, every man could transport himself, or neighbor, without putting himself to so much trouble to come to his house, but no one could ferry persons where his ferry is kept to his prejudice." The inhabitants did not care to depend on the interpretation of the law by the ferry owner and sent a petition to the general assembly, which, in May, 1702, voted that the free inhabitants of Jamestown, shall have liberty at all times to transport themselves and neighbors with their goods, or clothes, in their own boats, provided they transport not any for money, or any sort of pay, whereby the stated ferries may be damnified, except there be great occasion, or necessity, when the ferry-boats are out of the way, and cannot be had. This term "out of the way" was commonly used to apply to any ferry-boat which, for the time being, was not in service on its regular route. Many years later special provision was made that the inhabitants of Barrington and Warren should be permitted to transport freight across the ferry in their own boats. This quarrel between the farmers and the ferrymen continued to our own time, for, according to the stories of old inhabitants, the farmers of Jamestown exasperated the ferrymen by trying to avoid the payment of ferriage in every possible way. Those who possessed a boat, but no wharf, would bring the boat as near to the shore as possible and back a loaded ox-team into the water and load the boat with sheep and calves and farm produce. Who could tell if neighbors' calves and potatoes happened to be in the cargo? Even if money was not received in payment, recompense might be obtained in other ways which it would be impossible to prove in court. Many times, too, there was a dispute between ferryman and farmer as to whether the duly licensed ferry-boat was actually out of the way. The ferryman was grieved at this loss of income in the summer time, when transportation was easy and traffic was great, and yet he was obliged, during the hard winter season, to keep his boat in readiness at all times, although passengers were few and far between.

Franchise Tax and Bond

During a part of the period when the ferry business was flourishing in Rhode Island, a license fee was charged against the ferry owner, or he was obliged to pay an annual tax for his privilege. This was like the modern franchise tax which is assessed against public service corporations. Franchise taxes began early in Rhode Island, though at first they were very modest. On 2 August, 1698, Thomas Durfee and John Borden were required to pay six shillings annually for the privilege of the ferries which they operated between Portsmouth and Bristol. Perhaps it was because these ferries were only a few rods apart that the privilege was esteemed of no greater value. When Josiah Arnold in 1700 was given an exclusive franchise for the ferry from Conanicut, or Jamestown, to Narragansett, for a period of seven years, he was to pay an annual tax of £2.10.0 per year. The holders of the franchise for the ferry between Conanicut and Newport, granted the same year, were to pay an annual tax of £5 current money. The tax for Kelley's ferry in 1736 was forty shillings lawful money. It is of interest to note, that half a century later, owing to the inflation of the currency, with the corresponding increase in prices and wages, without a corresponding increase in rates of ferriage, the colony not only could not collect its franchise tax, but was obliged to purchase the ferry from Conanicut to Narragansett, in order to keep it running.

It was considered so important that the ferries should be properly maintained, that the owners of the ferries were obliged to give bond for the fulfilment of the terms of the franchise and for their obedience to the law. The owners of the Newport-Conanicut ferry in 1700, John Carr in Newport, and John Winterton on Conanicut, were required by the special act giving them their franchise, to give bonds jointly and severally to the value of £10. Bonds also were required by the special acts establishing other ferries. In May 1726 a general act for the guidance of the committee for leasing out the ferries provided "that such bonds as they have, or shall take, for the performance of the conditions of the leases, they have, or shall make for the leasing out of the ferries, shall be good to oblige the obligors to perform the same". The committee was empowered to sue and recover the bonds upon any breach of the same. By a later act the committee was required to file a copy of the bond with the general treasurer.

FERRIES AND LAND TITLES

In at least two instances in Rhode Island the title to ferry land carried with it the ferry privilege. The following mutilated record from the town of Portsmouth, though not perfectly clear, seems to indicate that this was the intention of the town:

> "i day of of november 1642
> first it is ordered that whosover s
> of land wherevppon Tho: Gorton hath
> house shall keepe the ferrie"

There is no further record of any licensing of the ferry, but when in 1647, the town could not make satisfactory arrangements with Gorton, he at once sold his land to John Sanford and five days later rates of ferriage were established for the latter's ferry. In 1695-6 Sanford sold the land with the privilege of the ferry. When the town of Providence, 3 March, 1678-9, deeded land at Narrow Passage to Andrew Edmond, he proposing to keep a ferry, it was probably intended that the owner of the land should thereby have the privilege of the ferry and thereafter the privilege always went with the transfer of the property. The action of the general assembly in confirming this ferry upon Andrew Edmonds' widow in 1696 was doubtless intended to be merely the confirmation of an acknowledged right.

The right of eminent domain was exercised, at times, in granting ferry privileges. In 1712, when, owing to complaints about Smith's Ferry from Narragansett to Jamestown, another and competing ferry was established by William Gardner under legislative authority, it would appear that trouble arose as to the landing on the Jamestown side. This would explain the following action of the general assembly:

"And whereas there is no provision made in the premises for Gardner and Smith to land their passengers;— It is further enacted, that the said Gardner and Smith have liberty to land their passengers at any place customary for ferry boats to take off and land passengers". Somewhat the same condition of affairs existed at Bristol Ferry in 1769 when Joseph Borden petitioned for a second ferry from Portsmouth to Bristol and asked for authority to land at Pearce's wharf in Bristol. This was granted.

Plymouth and Massachusetts Laws

Many Rhode Island ferries were inter-colonial affairs. The other side of about a dozen of our ferries was at one time, or another, within the confines of Plymouth, or Massachusetts, though the final settlement of the boundary dispute placed them all in Rhode Island. It is necessary, therefore, to refer to the ferry laws of these colonies.

In Massachusetts Bay, so far as we know, the towns never set up ferries, but as early as 9 November, 1630, the colony asked for bids to set up a ferry between Boston and Charlestown and on 14 June, 1631, made an agreement with Edward Converse for this purpose. An exclusive privilege was granted to all established ferries 7 October, 1641. Ferries were licensed, regulations made, and rates of fare fixed, from time to time, by the general court.

In Plymouth Colony too, ferry franchises were granted by the colony, as at Jones River 2 March, 1635-6 and, what more nearly concerns us, at Watchemoket 1 March, 1663-4. On 3 June, 1668, the colony directed a committee, consisting of John Cooke and Daniell Wilcockes, "to farme lett" the ferry at what is now Stone Bridge, "in behalf of the country". Plymouth did. however, allow the towns privileges in the control of ferries. As we shall see, the town of Swansea in Plymouth Colony established ferries across Warren River so early as 1681, and continued to exercise control, until this region was set off to Rhode Island as the town of Warren 28 May, 1746. Even as late as 10 August, 1747, after the annexation, the new town of Warren leased Kelley's ferry to Samuel Low, though it apparently had no right to do this, and the colony leased it to John Kelley in September. The town also leased another ferry to Caleb Carr. Though no record has been found that trouble arose from this, it probably did, for, 17 August, 1750, the town of Warren reimbursed a committee for its expenses at the general assembly concerning the ferries.

In the "Grand Deed" of Plymouth Colony, 14 September, 1680, the four proprietors of Bristol were to "have, possess and enjoy the whole and sole benefit, privilege and advantage of each and every ye Ferries that shall be made within the precincts of the said Necks". Gradually, by the sale and consolidation of proprietary rights, the ferry privilege came into private hands, but not until after Bristol was annexed to Rhode Island 28 May, 1746. The proprietors of Pocasset (Tiverton)

11 April, 1681, voted "that no one shall keep Publique ferry but only such as the said ferry lots shall be let or hired unto", these lots remaining the common property of the proprietors. As in Bristol, so in Pocasset, individuals soon began to try and get control of the ferry lots and the ferries by buying up the proprietors rights. This was successful.

At the North River Plymouth dealt with the ferry question in another way, which is of interest, though it has no connection with Rhode Island. The freemen of Scituate were ordered, 1637-8 to erect a ferry over the North River and, in September of the same year, each family was taxed twelve pence to build two boats, an early example of municipal ownership.

Although there was never a ferry, in colonial times, between Rhode Island and Connecticut, it is of interest to note the methods of dealing with ferries in the latter colony. Sometimes the colony allowed a town to operate a ferry, as Windsor, 5 January, 1641. More often, as at Lyme and Haddam, an individual was granted an exclusive franchise. By an act passed 4 October, 1660, it was provided that the ferry at Niantecot should belong to Governor Winthrop's farm.

In October, 1694, shortly after the union of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay, a new policy concerning ferries was adopted and it was enacted by the general court that no one should keep a ferry unless licensed by their Majesties justices in quarter sessions in the county where the ferry was situated, "except such ferries as are already stated and settled either by the court or towns to whom they appertain." As will be shown, when discussing Kelley's Ferry, a suit was brought in 1696 by the licensee of this ferry, under the above statute, to oust the proprietor of the ferry who had received his privilege from the town of Swansea. A verdict was given in favor of the plaintiff. Much information concerning the Massachusetts side of Rhode Island ferries may be found in the records of the court of general sessions of the peace of Bristol County.

Rules and Regulations

Another means of governmental control of ferries, besides the granting of leases, or franchises, was by statutory regulation. A great variety of regulations concerning the ferries, were, from time to time, enacted and the ferrymen were required, as was previously stated, to give bonds for their obedience. Definite penalties were also provided for the violation of these regulations. The ferry committees were directed to enforce these regulations, and in the later acts it was also made the duty of the town treasurers of the several towns in which ferries were established, to sue for, and recover all penalties incurred by breaches of any of the laws relating to ferries. The town treasurers were to report to the general assembly, all complaints laid before them and of their proceedings thereon. A penalty, also, was laid on the town treasurer for failure to prosecute violations.

The act of August, 1747, required that there should be convenient piers or wharves at all the ferries, and that they must always be kept in good repair and that there must be good and substantial boats, well fitted, and that the ferrymen must give good attendance "And that no Passenger, nor his Horse, shall be prevented or delayed in passing the Ferry, by Reason of Droves of any Sort of Creatures".

In the revision of 1767 it was provided that the ferryman must be ready to transport all persons with their carriages, horses, cattle stock, baggage and goods, wind and weather permitting.

Boats and Wharves

Later on, the law became more specific and required that the boat be provided with two good oars and one boat-hook and should, at all times, be kept afloat so that at common low water the boat can receive on board freight and passengers afloat and come to sail and cross the ferry. This last provision touched a matter of great importance to the traveling public, and one concerning which there was much complaint. It was difficult to build substantial wharves out into deep water and even when this was done, the sea would wash in the sand so that the water alongside was constantly shoaling.

The revised statutes of 1857 required that the ferry-boat must have a small rowboat with suitable oars.

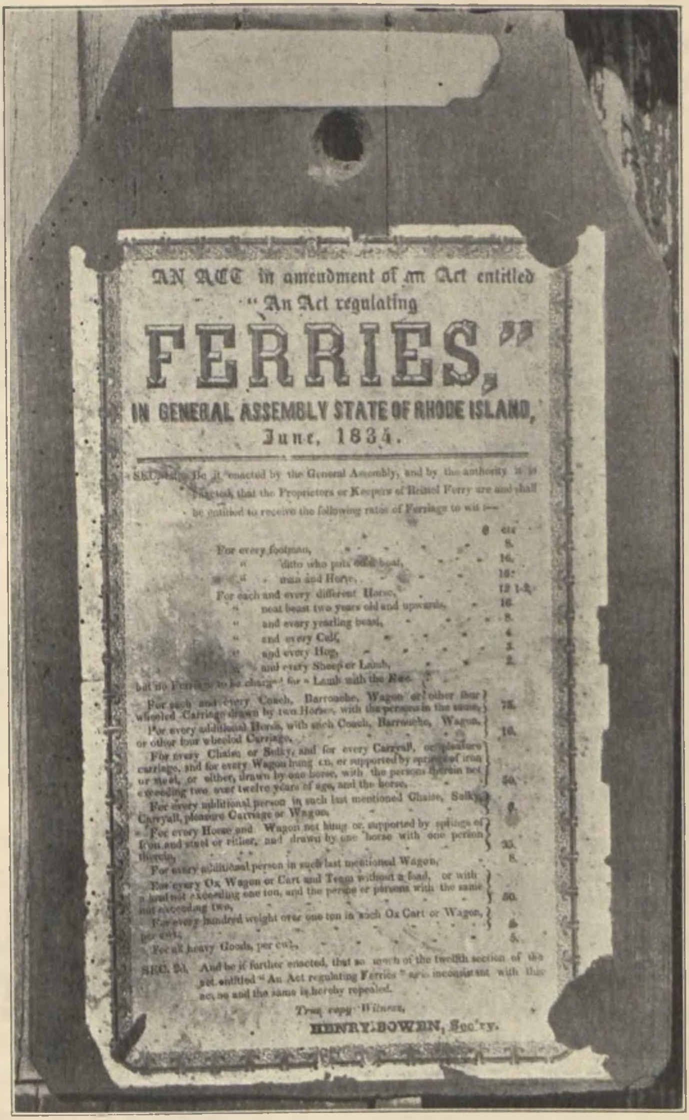
The law also provided that if any ferryman shall refuse or neglect to keep his boat afloat and in readiness, or shall refuse, or neglect, to convey, or transport, any person applying for passage, or conveyance of freight, and tendering, or paying, lawful ferriage therefor, the proprietor of such ferry, where such refusal, or neglect, shall happen, shall forfeit for each neglect, or refusal, the sum of ten dollars.

At the James Street Ferry in Providence it was forbidden to carry more than twelve passengers in a boat and a child over seven was to be considered a passenger. No loaded firearms were to be carried. When a temporary rope ferry was set up in Providence after the destruction of Weybosset Bridge by the September Gale of 1815, passengers were "advised not to stand on the gunwale of the scow for fear of accidents."

The laws of 1798 provided that, if the proprietors of the ferries shall neglect to have their respective wharves in suitable repair on, or before, the first day of October A. D. 1798, they shall pay to and for the use of the state, one hundred dollars, and for every month afterwards, ten dollars per month until completed; such neglect to be ascertained by a committee appointed for the purpose.

In Providence the proper lighting of the ferry wharves received attention and, 2 March, 1863, it was ordered that gas lights be placed at the James Street and Ship Street ferry landings.

In order that traffic might not be hindered by both boats being on one side of the ferry at the same time, the act provided that it shall be the duty of the ferryman to put off the boat whenever it shall appear that the boat from the other side is on her passage, or nearly arriving on that side where the boat is at the wharf.



AN ACT in amendment of an Act entitled
"An Act regulating
FERRIES,"
IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY STATE OF RHODE ISLAND,
June, 1834.

SEC. 1st. Be it enacted by the General Assembly, and by the authority it is enacted, that the Proprietors or Keepers of Bristol Ferry are and shall be entitled to receive the following rates of Ferriage to wit :—

	cts
For every footman,	8.
" ditto who puts [illegible] boat,	16.
" man and Horse,	16.
For each and every different Horse,	12 1-2.
" neat beast two years old and upwards,	16.
" and every yearling beast,	8.
" and every Calf,	4.
" and every Hog,	3.
" and every Sheep or Lamb,	2.

but no Ferriage to be charged for a Lamb with the Ewe.

For each and every Coach, Barrouche, Wagon or other four wheeled Carriage drawn by two Horses, with the persons in the same,	75.
For every additional Horse, with such Coach, Barrouche, Wagon, or other four wheeled Carriage,	10.
For every Chaise or Sulky, and for every Carryall, or pleasure carriage, and for every Wagon hung on, or supported by springs of iron or steel, or either, drawn by one horse, with the persons therein not exceeding two over twelve years of age, and the horse,	50.
For every additional person in such last mentioned Chaise, Sulky, Carryall, pleasure Carriage or Wagon,	8.
For every Horse and Wagon not hung or supported by springs of iron and steel or either, and drawn by one horse with one person therein,	33.
For every additional person in such last mentioned Wagon,	8.
For every Ox Wagon or Cart and Team without a load, or with a load not exceeding one ton, and the person or persons with the same not exceeding two,	50.
For every hundred weight over one ton in such Ox Cart or Wagon, per cwt.,	4.
For all heavy Goods, per cwt.,	5.

SEC. 2d. And be it further enacted, that so much of the twelfth section of the act entitled "An Act regulating Ferries" as is inconsistent with this act, be and the same is hereby repealed.

True copy Witness,
HENRY BOWEN, Sec'ry.

Rates of ferriage hung in ferry house at Bristol Ferry as required by statute. Owned by the Misses West of Bristol.

Another provision was that no ferryman should permit his boat to be absent from the ferry on any pretense whatever except for repairs under penalty of thirty dollars for every three hours of absence.

Judging from the number of complaints both the above regulations seem to have been very necessary.

In 1752 it was enacted that the owners of ferries must keep "the true stated Price for ferriages, affixed up in public view in a public Place, in the most public Room of the Ferry House". In the revision of 1822 they were required to post a printed abstract of the ferry laws, the condition in which the boats and wharves are to be kept, and the duties of proprietors and ferrymen and the penalties for a breach thereof, as well as the legal rates of ferriage. One of these fee tables owned by the Misses West of Bristol Ferry is shown in the illustration.

Hours of Service

Among the many regulations for the control of ferries was that relating to the hours of service. The act of August, 1747, provided that ferrymen must be ready to transport passengers from 5 A. M. to 8 P. M. from March 10 until September 10, and during the remainder of the year, from 6 A. M. to 7 P. M. "if the Weather will permit Boats passing".

It was, however, furthermore required that ferrymen must transport "Physicians, Surgeons, Midwives and Persons going to fetch Physicians, Surgeons, or Midwives, at any Time of Night". In February, 1753, it was provided that on working days the time of attendance was to be from sunrise to sunset, and after sunset for transporting such persons as were there waiting before. On the first day of the week persons were to be carried to and from public worship, also persons were to be carried who had been hindered from passing by weather, or accident, the day before, also physicians, midwives, etc., and those going for them. This was in response to a petition signed by a number of the ferrymen and dated February, 1753.

The fact that the laws, though strictly regulating the rates of ferriage during the hours of the day when ferrymen were by statute required to be on duty, had no provision about night-rates, was doubtless very annoying to the travelers who, as a consequence, were probably often compelled to haggle with the ferryman and perhaps to pay an exhorbitant fee. Greene says that it was the custom for a ferryman to charge as much for ferrying a passenger at night, as he would have to pay for his lodging, supper, breakfast and drinks. Many of the ferrymen kept a house of entertainment, and naturally were loath to lose a lodger. Greene suggests that the traveler on his part, probably at times, tried to beat the ferryman by pretending that he was on a hurry case for a doctor, or midwife.

Although we have not come across any record of such treatment of travelers by Rhode Island ferrymen, the following entry in the diary of Col. Isreal Angell, a staunch Rhode Island patriot of the Revolution, shows that ferrymen in other parts were ready to take advantage of travelers. When Col. Angell returned from a journey to the Ohio Valley, in 1788, he reached Paulus Hook in New Jersey on the evening of October 2. He writes; "here we found no boat, they all being over at York but the ferryman told us there would be a boat over imeadetly here we waited until 9 o'clock then he was kind enough to tell us we might put up our horses as there would be no boat that night, and having a hint by a gentleman that came to the ferry with me that he was a man frequently guilty of serving travelers such tricks to oblige them to spend their money with him. However I had seen too much of mankind to be catched by him I asked him what he would ask me to keep my hors the night he said 2 shillings. So I bid him good night and tho' a stranger thought I would take my chance rode about ½ a mile back where I got good entertainment for ¼ part of what that rascal would demand of me".

The post riders believed that they should have special privileges, and when these were refused, they complained about it. Stephen Hull, the western post rider from Newport, alleges that he takes the mail every Friday night when it arrives from

Boston, and returns on Friday of the next week. If the mail is late and it is dark, the ferryman refuses to take him across. Hull asks for an act and on the reverse of the petition it is stated that, on 27 June 1745, a resolution was adopted requiring the ferryman between Newport and Conanicut, and between Conanicut and Narragansett, to transport post riders without any charge up to 9 P. M.

Provision was first definitely made in 1798, for an extra charge outside the hours specified in the regulations, which was intended to do away with some of the haggling between the ferrymen and travelers. The rates of ferriage, as specified in the act, were to be enforced during the hours named above, but at all times other than as before provided, and on Sundays, Thanksgiving and fast days, passengers and freight "shall and may on payment, or tender, of double ferriage be conveyed across said ferries;"

At the ferry in Providence from James Street to Ship Street, first licensed in 1843, it was required that, between April 15 and October 15, there must be two boats on the service, between sunrise and 9 P. M. and four boats between 9 A. M. and sunset and half that number during the rest of the year, unless impeded by ice. On Sunday only one boat was required, but other boats might be put on before and after church and for special religious services.

COMPLAINTS

Since people now are constantly complaining about the service rendered by the railroads and trolley lines, it is not surprising to find that our ancestors were much given to criticizing the operation of the ferries, the most important common carriers of colonial times.

One of the most common complaints was that the ferryboat "was out of the way", that is, that she remained on the other side waiting for passengers for the return trip, or that the ferryman was not in attendance. In King Philip's War, Capt. Church was greatly annoyed that the boat at Bristol "was out of the way" when he wished to cross with his soldiers in pursuit of Anawan, but we must have some sympathy with the ferryman, if he did not wish to make regular trips over to the stronghold of the Indians, then upon the warpath. Complaints of poor attendance and failure to keep the boat in readiness, are frequently found up to the time of the last reports of the ferry commissioners. In 1818 the ferry commissioners report that "the boats are often taken from the ferry and employed as freight and passage boats, and they are very seldom put off as is required by law. Besides, there is a frequent want of the attention requisite at a ferry. The violations of the law, and this inattention in the ferrymen, ought to be prevented." Again, in 1852, it was reported that sufficient attention was not paid to the time of departure of the boats on the Newport-Jamestown ferries, so that both boats were often at Newport at the same time. In 1860 the ferry commissioners alleged that complaint was often made that the ferrymen were absent and failed to put off, when the other boat was half way across. The commissioners, who, in this report, seem inclined to make excuses for the ferry management, say that this rarely happened. The 1869 report alleges that the ferry-boat on the Narragansett Ferry was taken off of the ferry to load with turnips to carry to a vessel bound for the West Indies while one of the commissioners had to wait two hours for a passage. One of the most serious complaints of this nature was in a petition to the general assembly, 6 January, 1746, which states that the ferry between Warwick Neck and Prudence Island stagnates because the boat was so often out of the way. Dr. Thomas Spencer waited three or four hours for a boat to take him over to see his wife who was sick in Middletown and then he had to go by way of Narragansett. It was stated that there was no house near the ferry in Warwick, nor preparation for any. A number of the inhabitants of North Kingstown, 13 June, 1748, complained that there was only one boat on the ferry from that town to Jamestown so that people were detained, especially those that carried provisions to Newport, so that they could not get back the same day.

As will be shown, the horse boat at Bristol Ferry was more expensive to operate than the sailing boat, so that the proprietors much preferred to use the latter, to the annoyance of passengers who disliked to wait for a favorable wind. In their report for 1830 the ferry commissioners expressed their belief that the horse boat had been too often laid aside for the sail-boat.

Complaints About Wharves

That the wharves used by the ferry-boats were constantly getting out of repair and being broken down by the sea, or destroyed by military operations, will later be referred to. The letter of DeCorny, the French commissary of war, complained bitterly of the condition of the wharves at Bristol Ferry in 1780. When the ferry commissioners began to make formal reports, this was a common complaint. In 1799 the report states that the ferry wharves in Newport and on the east side of Conanicut were much out of repair. The wharf on the Portsmouth side of Bristol Ferry and on the Tiverton side of Howland's Ferry were reported in bad condition and the commissioners were to notify the owners that they were liable to prosecution. Indeed action was brought against the owner of the Bristol Ferry wharf. The next year complaints were again made of the Island wharf at Howland's Ferry, which needed another plate, so as to be more convenient at high water. At Newport the wharves were tolerable and at Jamestown they had been much injured by a storm. A half century later the commissioners, referring to Carr's Ferry in Newport, report that the "wharf is very bad and something ought to be immediately done to it".

It will be shown how sand tends to drift around projecting wharves, thus shoaling the water and preventing the boats from coming up to the wharves, especially at low water. This was a common complaint. The ferry commissioners also complain about it in 1818 concerning the wharf on the west side of Jamestown and at the South Ferry in South Kingstown. By 1860 dredges had come into common use and there was no excuse for the shoal water, but the proprietors of the West Ferry in Jamestown were called to task because the boats were frequently aground and they had neglected to clear away the sand from around the wharf. In 1869 matters were worse, for it was said that the boat would not float in the dock twelve hours out of the twenty-four. At the same time a similar complaint was made about the South Ferry landing in which it was alleged that five passengers were kept waiting three hours for the tide to float the boat which would not have been aground had it been at the head of the wharf when the tide fell.

Complaints About Boats

Not quite so many complaints about the ferry-boats and their equipment have come down to us. In 1799 it was reported that the four boats plying between Newport and Conanicut were not in good condition, especially that of J. J. Hazard, and that they were not provided with two oars as required by law and none of them had a good boat-hook. The boats at Bristol Ferry were better than formerly. In October Hazard's boat was still in bad condition, but by June of the next year the four boats plying between Newport and Jamestown were reported in good order. In October it was Pearce's boat at Bristol Ferry which was out of order. In 1818 Cottrell's boat on the west side of Jamestown was in poor condition. In 1860 complaint was made that the boats at Bristol Ferry were not sufficiently large, or suitable for carrying the larger vehicles then in use, but the commissioners did not require improvements, for they said that the boats were the same as for twenty years past and it was the vehicles that had become larger and the railroad was to be built from Fall River to Newport and a charter has been granted for a steam ferry so that a large capital outlay was not warranted.

Complaint was rarely made about illegal charges, perhaps because people found that it did little good, but the ferry commissioner, who had to wait two hours at Narragansett ferry because of the turnips, alleged that he was charged the rate for a single passenger, although there were two persons on the boat.

General Mismanagement

Sometimes the complaints were of lack of facilities or general mismanagement. Thus John Gardner, in a petition to the general assembly, February, 1748, alleges "that the inhabitants trade and commerce of this colony, have so far increased of late that the ferries established on the Narragansett shore, and the boats employed in that service are not sufficient to transport with convenience, the numerous passengers, their large droves, various effects and merchandise; the boats being often crowded with men, women, children, horses, hogs, sheep and cattle, to the intolerable inconvenience, annoyance, and delay of men and business'". As Gardner was asking for a license to keep another ferry, his description may have been somewhat colored to suit his needs, but that it was not without foundation is indicated by the fact that the general assembly granted his petition.

The Prince de Broglie, in his description of his visit to Newport in 1782, in writing of the Newport-Conanicut Ferry, says, "it is a good league wide and not always safe. We arrived there at night. The business of embarking the horses, and the anxiety and fear of some of the passengers as the bark rolled to and fro, was not at all amusing, especially at night. We passed about an hour in this critical fashion, and at last the 'pilot' finished by striking a sand bank about two hundred steps from the place where we should have landed. All the passengers, masters and servants were compelled to work so as to disengage us. We jumped into the water where it was about two feet deep and thus it was that we made our entrance into Newport; that charming place regretted by the whole army". Perhaps the Prince was not much of a sailor, for a little further on he calls the ferry at Tiverton "sufficiently formidable and rather dangerous in heavy winds". Mishaps in landing were not always due to the ferryman, but were sometimes admittedly the result of the passengers haste, or carelessness. Capt. William Chandler in his humorous verses on his survey of Narragansett Bay in 1741 writes:

"Our haste in business call'd us from this Town
By Seaconk shore, away to Barrington
Passing that Ferry, something did accrue
Which the next Lines shall give unto your view,
Here jumping out our Horses from the Boat
One blundering sprang which rais'd up each Man's note
And tumbling o'er the Horse fell on his Back
Into the Deep and wet his Master's Pack".

Ferrymen's Privileges

The ferrymen had a few privileges which made their calling somewhat more attractive. In the revision of the laws in 1730 ferrymen were exempt from jury duty. In the revision of 1767 this was changed to read one ferryman at each ferry. In 1820 it was one ferryman at each stated ferry who usually navigates the boat, and this provision has been retained in the law until the present time.

Many of our ancestors found military duty irksome and doubtless the ferrymen were well pleased, when, in 1712, the old Elizabethan common law practice was enacted into statute, that one man belonging to each ferry should be discharged from any duty in the militia.

In 1718 a special act exempted from training both men who attended the rowing boat at Howland's Ferry. Later on it was provided that all ferrymen at any ferry on a post road should be exempt from service in the militia. In the revision of 1857 the exemption is for one ferryman at each stated ferry who usually navigates the boat, as well as for all ferrymen at a ferry on a post road, and the latter exemption is in the present law.

License to Sell Strong Drink

Besides such petty privileges as exemption from jury duty and military training, there were other and more powerful inducements to engage in the ferry business. Most important among these was the selling of strong drink and the lodging of travelers.

Long before there was any general legislation especially favorable to ferrymen concerning the sale of liquor and the establishment of houses of entertainment, the authorities seemed to consider the furnishing of liquid refreshment to be a natural and desirable collateral business for the ferrymen. Among the ferrymen on Rhode Island during the seventeenth century, Ralph Earle, Thomas Durfee and Joseph Anthony kept houses of entertainment. On Conanicut Josiah Arnold and Jonathan Marsh had similar licenses. A similar custom prevailed in the neighboring Plymouth colony and Richard Bulloucke of Rehoboth, 1 March 1663-4 "is allowed by the Court to keep the ferrey there * * * is also lycensed to sell liquors to strangers and passengers, but not to town dwellers". The Massachusetts government, in what is now the Rhode Island town of Tiverton, granted a license for a house of entertainment to the proprietors of Howland's and Fogland's Ferries. According to the Howland Genealogy, Daniel Howland, good quaker as he was, kept a public house at his ferry at which the town meetings were held, so did his widow Mary, until her marriage with Daniel Goodspeed in 1712, and afterward her son kept both the ferry and the tavern. In 1707 the court of general sessions of Bristol County, Mass., granted a license to Job Almy to sell strong drink as he was the keeper of the ferry from Pocasset to the Island (Fogland ferry) since it was found that passengers passing over said ferry have need of refreshment.

Josiah Arnold, 2 March, 1701-2, was called before the town council of Jamestown on complaint that he sold strong drink. He affirmed that he had done no such thing and that the complaint was spite. When asked if he claimed a right to sell drink because he had a ferry license, he answered no. He was thereupon granted a temporary license. Later on, leniency to ferrymen in the matter of licenses was sanctioned by statute.

By an act of 16 June, 1719, ferrymen were exempted from the colonial act governing the sale of strong liquors, on the ground that they only sold small quantities to such as travel across the ferries, and have not such custom as other houses; and, it being very convenient for them to sell strong liquors to refresh travelers, it was voted that town councils should have authority to license ferrymen to retail strong liquors for any such sum as they shall think fit, any custom, law, or usage, to the contrary notwithstanding. Another act relating to ferrymen's licenses was passed in 1767. All persons were forbidden to display a sign for the keeping of a public house unless a license had been first obtained from the town council, but it was provided "that all Ferry Houses be and they are here by excepted out of this Act".

When the ferryman did not sell liquor, the public sometimes demanded that someone else should do so near the ferry landing, for we find among the old papers in the City Hall of Providence a petition from many residents in Tockwotten and others, that John Thomas be licensed to keep a public house for the benefit of those who pass the ferry, or go by water. This John Thomas, the inn holder, who died 27 November 1759 kept his inn where now is the Home for Aged Women.

EARLY PROHIBITION

That the saloon might at times become a menace was early recognised, as is shown by the following which was passed by the town council of Jamestown 11 December, 1721:

"Voted & ordered the Clarke of the Councill Set up two Prohibitions forthwith at the ferry house to prohibit all Retaillers of strong drink and all other Person or Persons not to let John Carr of Jamestown have no strong Drink according to the Act of the General Assembly the second of May 1721"

Now, after 200 years, prohibition applies not to one person, but to 100,000,000.

OTHER BUSINESS

The ancient ferrymen sometimes dispensed spiritual as well as spirituous refreshment, for George Parker Winship calls attention to a note on a book in Harvard College library "The Vision of Divine Mystery" printed in the year 1732. These books were to be sold by John Angell, merchant, and Moses Bartlett, both of Providence and Thomas Northup, ferryman at Boston Neck, and others. This Thomas Northup was keeper of the North Ferry, between North Kingstown and Conanicut, and his house stood no more than a stone's throw from the summer cottage of the authors', just below Plum Beach.

It is not at all unlikely that other things besides rum and religious books were sold by the early ferrymen, though such does not happen to have come to our knowledge. We are told, however, by those who remember the last days of the sailing boats on the old South Ferry, that, in the waiting rooms at Kingstown and at Jamestown were offered for sale cigars, tobacco, candy and similar things likely to be purchased by travelers. Indeed such a stand is found on the ferry wharf in Newport at the present time. That the ferry place was considered a good location for trade is shown by the statement of Benjamin Ellery, merchant and ferry owner of Newport, that he had moved the market house that was on The Point to his ferry wharf.

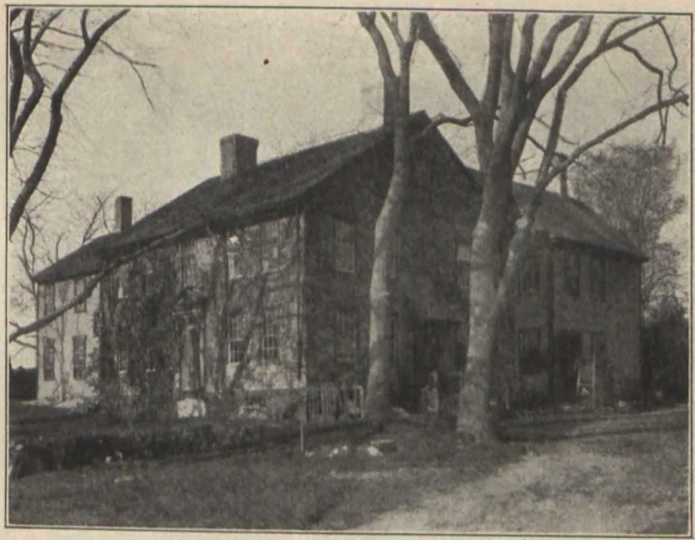
Although no accounts have come down to us that the early ferrymen did an express, or commission business, yet it must often have been a great convenience for their neighbors to call upon them for such services. Indeed we are told by the ferrymen now living that this was the custom in their day and that they were frequently commissioned to carry vegetables and eggs from Jamestown to the Newport market.

FERRY TAVERNS

The term "house of entertainment" was to a certain extent, in olden times, more or less of a euphemism for saloon, for the business of furnishing lodging and meals, was, many times a minor matter, as compared with the sale of alcoholic beverages. Still, though there was no need of large hotels in those days, and though we are told by Rev. Daniel Neal, referring to his travel through Rhode Island, that "a Traveller passing through these Towns may call at any House with the same Liberty as if he were in an Inn, and be kindly entertained with the best they have for nothing", nevertheless the slowness of travel made necessary, numerous real "houses of entertainment" where travelers could be put up for the night. We do not have to depend upon the imagination for a picture of the miserable accommodation in some of these early wayside taverns. Thus Madame Knight, in her diary of her journey to New York in 1704 describes her dinner at a tavern on the way from Boston to Providence: "Here, having called for something to eat, ye woman bro't in a Twisted thing like a cable, but something whiter; and laying it on the bord, tugg'd for life to bring it into a capacity to spread; wch having wth great pains accomplished, shee serv'd in a dish of Pork and Cabage, I suppose the remains of Dinner. The sause was of a deep Purple, wch I tho't was boil'd in her dye Kettle; the bread was Indian, and everything on the Table service Agreeable to these. I, being hungry, gott a little down; but my stomach was soon cloy'd and what cabbage I swallowed serv'd me for a cudd the whole day after."

Although Madame Knight's tavern was not a ferry house, it was doubtless an indication of what the latter must have been. Indeed we have a very similar picture of what the conditions were at a ferry house on Conanicut nearly half a century later. James Birket, a traveler from the West Indies, in writing of his passage over the ferries, 3 October, 1750, says, "we then crossed this island, being one mile to the next ferry, but it blowed so hard we could not get over, so was obliged to dine with an ill-natured scold at the ferry house, who gave us potatos and tautog with an intolerable dirty cloth". Doubtless an example of a high grade establishment was to be found in the house of Capt. Josiah Arnold on the same island in the early part of that century. Capt. Arnold was a son of Governor Benedict Arnold, a wealthy man, and himself a man of means. Judge Sewall, who was fond of good living, and appreciated it, on his journeys to look after his wife's lands at Point Judith, stopped with Arnold as early as 1699. Perhaps Arnold did not keep a licensed house at that time, but he did as early as 1703. On the opposite shore, in Narragansett, John and Jeremiah Smith, when setting up their ferry in 1695-6, agreed that each, when operating the ferry, should have liberty to give entertainment to passengers and horses, provided they intend to go over the ferry. Herman Moll in his *Modern History,* published in Dublin in 1739, in referring to the "stage wagon" which goes from Boston to Newport in Rhode Island, says, "there are Inns on the roads as well provided for the entertainment of travelers, as those of *Old England.*" Perhaps this was not much of a compliment after all. Dr. Hamilton, traveling in 1744, before crossing Narragansett Ferry, spent the night with Case at Tower Hill, who he said "keeps a pretty good house, is a talkative prating man, and would have everybody know that he keeps the best public house in the country". A few days later, 17 July, 1744, Hamilton, before crossing Bristol Ferry "dined at Burdens, a Quaker, who keeps the ferry, where we had good entertainment". This was John Borden, referred to by many other travelers.

It was especially necessary that there should be a house of entertainment for travelers, at the ferries, and there was usually demand for it on both sides. The law, which, for a great many years, permitted ferrymen to charge exhorbitant rates at night, made travelers willingly seek lodgings, if not too expensive, so that they might wait for daylight for passage across the water, meanwhile, of course, refreshing the inner man. It must be remembered too, that some of our most important ferries were operated by sailing boats and that passage was frequently interfered with by calms, or high winds, as in James Birket's experience, just referred to.

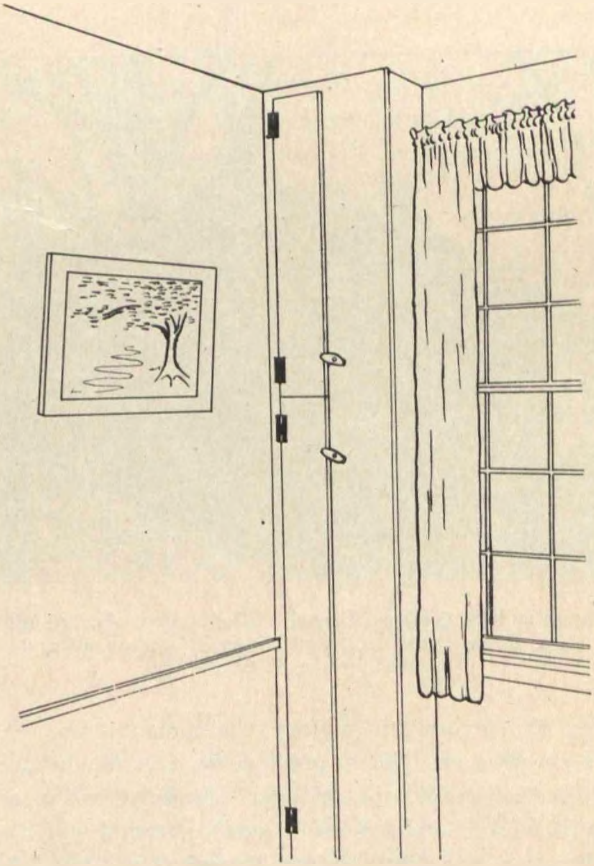


Ferry House at Bristol Ferry, Bristol. Ell in rear probably built before 1750. Main house built much later. Now owned and occupied by the Misses West.

During the eighteenth century the almanac was a great American institution. These publications contained much useful information besides the calender. Many served as a rudimentary Baedeker, and gave the routes of travel with the distances between important taverns, though it has not been observed that any of these were "starred", and it is to be doubted if many were worthy of it. From these almanacs, of which the Rhode Island Historical Society possesses an excellent collection, it is seen that many of the ferry keepers were tavern keepers also. Among these may be mentioned Gifford, Pearce and Borden at Bristol Ferry, Cadman and Gray at Fogland

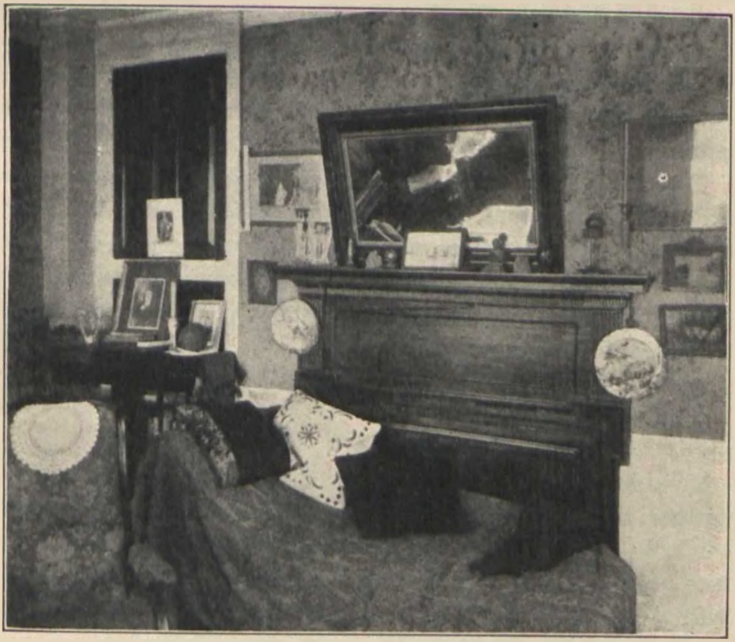
Ferry, the Smiths, Gardner, Martin and Franklin at the South Ferry and Northup at the North Ferry.

Although several of the houses occupied by ferry owners, or by ferrymen, are now in existence on Conanicut, in Narragansett and at Taggart's ferry on Rhode Island, they were, with two or three exceptions, built about the middle of the last century, or just before. The most characteristic ferry house



"Byles Cupboard." Corner cupboard in ancient bar-room in the old ell of the Wests' ferry house at Bristol Ferry, Bristol. It is said that Josiah Byles, ferryman, kept his liquors here.

of the eighteenth century, still standing, is that on the Bristol side of Bristol Ferry, now owned and occupied by the Misses West. The rear part of this house is much older than the rest, and was originally nearer the road, where traces of the old cellar can now be seen. In the old kitchen is a cupboard, always known as Byles cupboard. It is said that here is where Josiah Byles kept his store of liquids for the refreshment of travelers. Byles was part owner of the ferry farm and sold his interest in 1740. In 1753 the ferry came into the possession of the Pearce family, who moved the house and built a front portion. The bar-room was thereafter in the southeast corner, (right-hand side of illustration) the present interior



Bar-room in main part of Bristol Ferry House at Bristol. At the upper left corner is the liquor cupboard. On the table is a cannon ball, dug up in the garden, fired from the British Fleet during the Revolution.

of which is also shown. We can well imagine how travelers detained by storm, or ice, would spend their evenings in this room, finding fault with the ferry keeper, and blaming the elements. Doubtless too, the neighbors would come over to hear the latest gossip about the high-handedness of the customs officers, or the doings of the general assembly, while the ferrymen would earn many an extra shilling selling flip and hot toddy. Later on, an ell was added to the west side of the house, in which the ferrymen lived, while Capt. West lived in the main portion. One reason why Capt. West relinquished his ferry license was that he did not care to undertake to furnish accommodations for travelers when passage across the ferry was prevented by bad weather.

Another ancient ferry house, perhaps built soon after the Revolution, was that belonging to the Ellery Ferry in Jamestown. The waiting room was the right-hand room on the lower floor. The old ferry house in Narragansett, now torn down, is illustrated in the account of that ferry. The door on the right led to the bar.

Quarantine for Smallpox

In colonial times there was the greatest fear of contagious disease, especially smallpox. This disease, which appeared repeatedly in epidemic form, usually spread from the large centres of population. Until the most recent times great reliance was placed on quarantine, that is, the restriction of intercourse, to keep out the disease. The first Rhode Island act on this subject was that of February 1711 which provided that the masters of vessels, coming from infected places "shall not bring to anchor their Ship or Vessel in any of the Ports of this Government, with in the distance of one Mile of any Public Ferry, Pier, or Landing Place". There was much smallpox in Boston in 1721, 1730, 1752, 1764, and 1776-8 and on each occasion action was taken to prevent its spread to Rhode Island. On 10 August, 1721, all persons coming from infected places were required to wait five days before entering the colony. No legislation has been found at so early a period providing for placing guards at the ferries, but this was certainly done. The Rev. John Cromer writes in his diary, under 9 May, 1730, "Return home well, I and my wife were sworn at Ye Ferry by G. Thomas yt. we had not been at Boston in seven days. Note, he is set there by ye authority on ye account of ye smallpox". This five-day, or seven-day quarantine is entirely inadequate. To be effective at least fourteen days would be necessary, but even during the last few years we have witnessed fully as absurd restriction of travel. Cromer probably went over Bristol Ferry, but the same year the general assembly paid Benjamin Sheffield, Thomas Northup and William Anthony for quarantine duty, presumably at the South and North Ferries and at Howland's ferry respectively.

An act passed on the last Wednesday in October 1730 forbids the importation of goods except with a permit, and unless they have been aired. Later we find that fumigation was required, for in June, 1752, the general assembly allowed bills for the construction of a "smoke house" at Bristol Ferry.

In 1738, on account of smallpox in Martha's Vineyard, a guard was set at Cook's Ferry between Rhode Island and Tiverton, and doubtless at Newport also. Smallpox entered the colony, nevertheless, and early the next year, Samuel Carr, the owner of the Newport-Conanicut Ferry, and his daughter Waite, died of the disease and were buried on Goat Island.

Although quarantine guards had, from time to time, been placed at the ferries, the first specific law on this subject which we have found, was the act of 14 February, 1743, which authorized the "Assistants, Justices of the Peace, or Wardens" in any town, to appoint persons to guard the ferries against the introduction of contagious disease. In 1752 we find that such guards were set at Anthony's and Howland's ferries in Tiverton, at Bristol Ferry, at the West ferry at Jamestown and at Fuller's ferry and Barstow's ferry in Providence, as well as at the "Bristol Gate", Pawtucket Bridge and in Cumberland and Smithfield. The pay of the guards varied from twenty to forty shillings a day, presumably in accordance with the amount of traffic. The guard at Fuller's ferry was kept on duty 153 days which cost the colony £229.10.0. David Anthony stood guard at Bristol Ferry for 191 days for which he received £380. In October, 1764, Moses Brown, then a member of the general assembly, presented the bill of John Brown for 128 days attendance at Narrow Passage Ferry, to prevent smallpox being brought into the colony, and also a bill of John Hamman for a smoke-house.

INTERRUPTION OF TRAFFIC

During the latter part of the eighteenth century, smallpox was exceedingly virulent and fatal, and people grasped at everything which promised any relief. When a person is inoculated with smallpox matter, the disease runs a very much milder course than when it is acquired in the natural way, but the inoculated person is likely to give the severe disease to others, hence when people wished to be inoculated they were obliged to go to special hospitals where they could be isolated. In the summer of 1776 the town of Providence voted to establish a hospital for the inoculation of smallpox, and pending its construction, certain houses were hired at Tockwotten, near the Lower Ferry, for this purpose. It was appreciated that making this location a nest of smallpox would interfere with the patronage of the ferry, and 12 July 1776 it was voted that the committee in charge of the hospital should estimate the weekly damage which would accrue to the owners of the Lower Ferry, by means of inoculation being carried on at Tockwotten. A week later it was voted that Mr. Caleb Fuller, who kept the ferry, be prohibited from transporting any person who had been where smallpox was prevalent. It was also voted that a place be provided at the Upper Ferry to smoke and cleanse persons who had come from Boston or other infected places. Mr. William Daggett, who kept the last named ferry, was to oversee it, and receive an allowance. A request was sent to the town of Smithfield to set guards at Cumberland and Pawtucket bridges. Natural smallpox, which now began to prevail, was also taken to the before-mentioned hospital, until the presence of so many cases in the compact part of the town was objected to, as being dangerous for the troops passing through, and 5 February, 1777, it was voted that the hospital "be moved to North Providence". On 15 February the town caused an advertisement to be inserted in the *Providence Gazette* that the Lower or Fuller's Ferry was open to the public, as no person was then under operation for smallpox and particular attention had been given to the cleansing of the house. Later in the month Fuller put in a bill of damages for the obstruction of his ferry from 6 November, 1776, to 15 February, 1777, amounting to £8.17.3 and also a bill of £3.6.0 lawful money, due his mother, Mehitable Fuller, who had an interest in the ferry. The receipts, dated 29 April, 1777, are on file in the City Hall at Providence.

TRANSPORTATION OF PRISONERS AND SLAVES

As ferries were the principal means of communication, the government naturally took advantage of this whenever there was need to control travel. Thus, where it became necessary to guard the community against the introduction of contagious disease, it was at the ferry landings where most of the quarantining was done. So, too, prisoners, breaking jail, or slaves seeking to escape, would quite likely have to attempt passage over a ferry. In war time the escape of deserters over the ferries had to be guarded against. The following is an account of some of the legislation relating to these subjects:

On 27 October, 1714, an act was passed forbiding any ferryman, or boatman, transporting any slaves without a certificate under the hands of their masters, or mistresses, or some person in authority, upon the penalty of paying all costs and damages their said masters, or mistresses, shall sustain thereby. The legislators thought that they had thus guarded against the escape of slaves, and they probably did not think that a slave might steal the ferry-boat. The following note from the *Rhode Island Gazette* for 22 December, 1732, shows that at least once this actually happened. "We have certain Advice, that a Surranam Indian Man Servant who went away some months past in one of the Point Ferry Boats of this place, was taken up in the Latitude of 26° by Capt. Egleston on his Passage from Antigua to London. He had in the Boat when he was taken up some raw Fish and a Cag of Rain Water. 'Tis thought a Cag of Water was all his Sea Store, there being other Provision enough in his Master's House which he might easily have taken; yet none was missing by him or any of the Neighbors."

As 26° is about the latitude of the Bahamas, this occurrence shows that the ferry-boats were staunch little craft and that this particular Indian was a good sailor. We are left in doubt as to whether the Indian, or the boat, were ever recovered by the owner.

In 1745 it was found extremely difficult to get men for the expedition against Louisburg, and empressment of seamen became necessary. The press gang found the ferries about Newport an excellent place for lying in wait for victims, for Joseph Scott, sheriff of Newport, received the sum of £20 for stopping the ferries, and empressing soldiers and seamen and for the expenses of his officers and press gang.

Earlier in the season there had been trouble on account of desertions, and for a while, during the month of June, ferrymen, boatmen and others were forbidden to transport any seaman off from Rhode Island, except by certificate of the governor, and they were forbidden to transport them off from the Island of Conanicut except to land them at Newport. The Captain at Fort George was directed to stop all sloops, boats, canoes and other vessels going out of the harbour of Newport excepting ferry-boats.

As, at the present time, detectives watch at the terminals of our great railway systems, for criminals, or scan the passengers embarking on transatlantic liners, so in the olden time the officers of the law watched at the South Ferry, or Bristol Ferry, or Howland's Ferry, for those who were seeking to escape justice. These efforts were sometimes successful, for we read that, in 1737, when three men escaped from Newport jail, Jeremiah Weeden received compensation for sending men after them, and stopping all the ferries and also for furnishing food for the prisoners.

Location of Ferries

Doubtless the location of most Rhode Island ferries was chosen, because, at the point selected, the distance across the water was the shortest, or perhaps, because, in a few instances, the landing place was especially suitable. It is also of some importance that where the passage is narrow the water is deeper and the shores are bold. It has been suggested that the settlers followed the old Indian trails, but it is more likely, that both Indians and white men selected the narrowest passage and made their trails and built their roads to these points. Welcome A. Greene, on a map of early Providence, shows the Wampanoag Trail passing across where is now Red Bridge, and the Montaup Trail crossing near Washington Bridge, and at these sites the white men later established the Upper and Lower Ferries. The site of the present Great Bridge, across the Providence river, was at the narrowest point, and here, in early times, the ferry was established, and several bridges successively built. Many years later there was another ferry set up between Fields Point and Kettle Point, as they are now called. For the settlers on the Island of Rhode Island, the establishment of a ferry was a necessity, and the safest place, and the narrowest passage, was in the vicinity of the present Stone Bridge, where Thomas Gorton was licensed to keep a ferry in 1640. Some years later Bristol Ferry was established at another narrow place, and later still, the ferry to Fogland Point, the shortest distance to the mainland below Stone Bridge. The present Kelly's Bridge marks the narrowest place in Warren River, between Warren and Barrington, and here a ferry was established in 1680.

In a few instances the name of the ferry became the place name of the surrounding region. For a hundred years the village at Tiverton was known as Howland's Ferry, until, after the construction of the bridge, the name was displaced by that of Stone Bridge. For more than two centuries the country on both sides of Bristol Ferry has been known by that name. During the first half of the nineteenth century quite a little village grew up around the South Kingstown terminus of the Jamestown-Narragansett Ferry, with a cotton mill, ship-yard, hotel, store and church. This village was known as the South Ferry, but all that is now left of it, is the empty church on the top of the hill, and the "Narragansett House", which serves as barracks for United States soldiers.

Though we can find no record that the ferry between Middletown and Little Compton was ever a licensed ferry, boats plied regularly for many years, and for a long time after they ceased, the region around about the landing place on The Island was known as Taggart's Ferry.

In Providence, too, ancient deeds of property in and around what is now Tockwotten Park, fixed the location as "near the old ferry place".

FERRYMEN

Nearly all of the first settlers had to labor with their hands, as well as use their brains. Most of them were chiefly occupied in clearing the land, building their houses, and tilling the soil. Doubtless most of the early ferrymen were only occasionally called from the duties of husbandry, to take a neighbor, or a stray traveler, across the ferry. The owner of the ferry-boat and the man who sailed it were usually one. With the development of society, capital and labor became separated, and the proprietor of the ferry often hired others to sail the boat. It does not seem as though a man of means like John Sanford, who was general treasurer, general recorder, attorney general and deputy at different times for a long period of years, could have operated the ferry-boats himself, neither is it likely that Governor Carr did. Although the Carr family owned the ferry from Newport to Jamestown for many generations, for the most part at least, they do not seem to have sailed the boats, but to have been engaged in other kinds of business in Newport. We know that in 1718, Daniel Howland had two men that tended his ferry. Later on, petitions and other papers not rarely record the distinction between ferry owner and ferryman. In 1728 Samuel Clarke of Conanicut, was required to keep another ferry-boat and ferryman. In 1738 John and Ebenezer Smith, yoemen, who were the owners, and Jonathan Nichols, ferryman, petitioned for an increase in ferry rates, but Nichols was the owner of the ferry-boat as well as its navigator, while the Smiths owned the land and wharf and buildings. According to Capt. Eaton, there was a similar arrangement on the opposite side of this ferry in 1869, when Benjamin Gardiner was the owner and a man named Peters was keeper and boatman. A little later Christian Louth hired the ferry from I. Bowen Briggs and supplied and sailed the boat. In August, 1746, Edward Gardner, ferryman of the

Left—Capt. Oliver G. Hicks of Portsmouth, the last ferryman at Bristol Ferry. Right—Capt. J. Lester Eaton of Saunderstown, the last man to sail one of the old style sail ferry-boats on the South Ferry.

North Ferry, in North Kingstown, petitioned for a driftway, which he would not have been so likely to do if he had been merely a boatman and without interest in the boat or ferry. The names of many of the boatmen on the Newport, Jamestown and Conanicut ferries in modern times and also on the Providence River ferries are noted in the histories of those ferries. In 1775 orders were issued to the proprietors of the ferries and their ferrymen about the regulations to prevent live stock falling into the hands of the British.

Sometimes younger members of the family tended the ferry, and it is surprising how young some of the boys were. Andrew Edmonds, who operated the ferry at Red Bridge for his mother in 1695, was only fourteen years old, and William Dagget who was running the ferry-boat in 1770 was the same age. Capt. Eaton sailed the big boat across the South Ferry when he was only fifteen years of age. Capt. Hicks, of Bristol Ferry, was another boy ferryman. A boy must have been brought up on the water to be able to manage these large boats, and must have been strong, too. When the committee purchased the Narragansett Ferry for the colony in 1748, they hired Thomas Spencer to keep the ferry, as he was capable of caring for the boats in stormy weather. This, they said, requires much judgment and not every one can do it. Sometimes, also, the "women folks", as we learn from Judge Sewall, took a hand at the oars. At times slaves were employed on the boats, as when the Indian ran away with The Point ferry-boat in 1732, and when the colony took possession of the widow Franklin's ferry-boat and negro man in 1775.

Ferry Roads

When we consider the early ferries we should try to picture to ourselves the country as it then was. During the years when the first ferry-boats went back and forth at Weybosset, at India Point, at Stone Bridge, and at Bristol Ferry, the country was covered, down to the water's edge, with a thick and heavy growth of pine, hemlock and oak. Occasionally, on the shore, was an Indian corn field, or a camping ground. There were the little settlements under the hill at Providence, about the "White Church" at Rumford, and at the northern end of the Island of Rhode Island. There was only a house, or two, on the mainland at Stone Bridge, and this and the Bristol peninsula were held by the Indians, who, after the death of Osamequin looked none too favorably upon the presence of the white men. Only bridle paths led through the forest. When, 8 May, 1688, a highway was laid out from Taunton through what is now Fall River to Little Compton, it was described as following "the ancient path", which was doubtless the old trail leading through the Indian lands and traveled by the inhabitants of Rhode Island on their journeys over Sanford's Ferry to Boston. This highway passed along the head of the roads leading down to Wirbapinsett Ferry, (Slade's Ferry), Durfee's Ferry and Woodwall's (Wodells) Ferry. Roads passable for wheeled vehicles came into being slowly. We all know what poor affairs the best of Rhode Island roads were before the advent of the automobile. The more primitive and less used were rougher still, with stones and tree roots and muddy places. Nevertheless these roads, as we knew them, were the results of two hundred years of labor. What, then, must have been the condition of the earliest wagon roads between Rhode Island and the neighboring colonies? In most instances, for years after the principal ferries were established, there were no public highways leading to them, but travelers made their way through more or less defined paths among the trees.

Although the town of Rehoboth in 1664, voted to lay out a highway to Narrow Passage (Red Bridge), a number of years before the ferry was established, the highway in Providence, leading to this ferry was not finally laid out until 1739. When the house lots were platted for the first settlers of Providence, highways were provided about where Meeting Street and Power Street now are, but it was very many years before they were laid out and extended across "The Neck" to the ferries over the Seekonk. The ferry at India Point was possibly established in 1664 and travelers had to make their way to it up Power's Lane, down Hope Street, and as best they might, down the hill and along the shore. It was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that Hill Street and India Street were laid out as public highways.

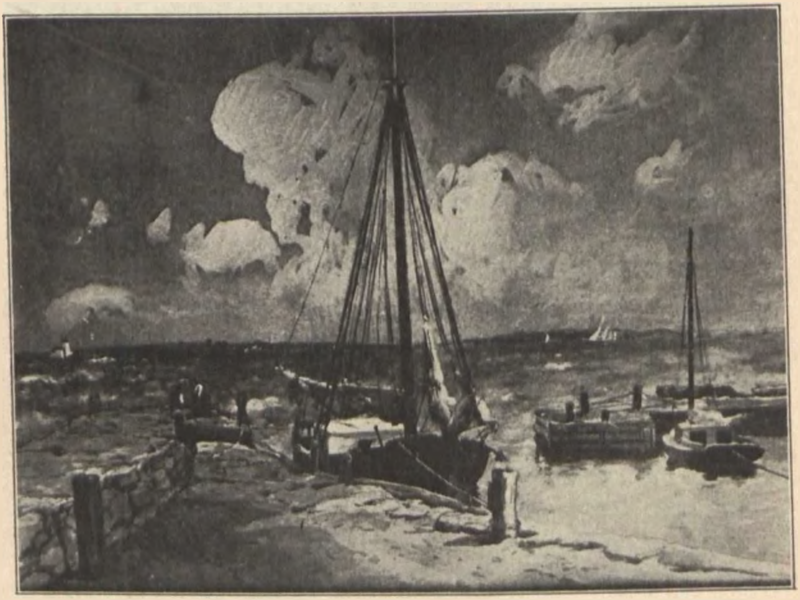
Although, 19 October, 1681, a petition was presented to the Swansea proprietors for a highway through Brooks Pasture (Warren) to Kelly's Ferry which was then in operation, the highway was not laid out until 15 May, 1688, when it was laid out from Bristol Ferry up to Kelly's Ferry, and then around Belcher's Cove, over Miles Bridge into Rehoboth, and so connecting with the road to Woodcock's leading to Boston. Bristol ferry was in operation before King Philip's War and, of course at that time, there were no roads and it was not until the date above mentioned that a road was laid out.

In Rhode Island, in early times, there was some doubt as to the jurisdiction of colony, town and proprietary concerning the layout of highways, and the colony occasionally took a hand in the business. The ferries on both sides of Conanicut were in operation in 1700 and probably several years before, but there seems to have been trouble about the highways, so that 4 January, 1703-4, the general assembly ordered a survey of the island which was accepted by the proprietors 24 April, 1704, and the general assembly ordered the proprietors to establish the highways in accordance therewith. This they apparently neglected to do, for, in August 1709, the general assembly ordered the proprietors to lay out a four rod highway from sea to sea "by the last Monday in this instant, as it is for her Majesty's service", which probably meant that it was for a post road. This is the road now called Narragansett Avenue between the two ferries in Jamestown. This road was therefore the land portion of the highway leading from Newport to Narragansett, the ferries on each side of Conanicut being the water portions. During the later years of the sailing boats the proprietors of the ferries on both sides of the island kept a horse and wagon to transport passengers and goods. It would seem that some such means of transportation must have been provided in earlier years, but no record has come down to us. In very early times it was scarcely necessary, as most travel was on horseback and travelers took their horses over the ferries. After the advent of the steam ferry a large van became necessary and later a motor van.

Post Routes

When Madame Knight made her journey in 1704, the post route from Boston to New York passed through Providence and then followed what is still known as the Old Post Road. The legislation just referred to, would indicate that it was intended to change the route, to go through Newport and over Conanicut Island, into the Narragansett country. A map of 1715 shows the post road taking this course. The post rider followed this route in 1743, but the mails must have, a little later, been diverted through Providence, for the post road is described as running through Greenwich and Tower Hill in the almanacs of 1765 to 1772. It was then returned to Newport and Conanicut, for in 1773 John Carter, the postmaster in Providence, complained "that the mails from the westward by a late alteration in the Post route now cross five ferries between Narragansett and Providence, whereas by the old route there's not so much as one ferry to cross". The five ferries were, the ferry from Narragansett to Conanicut, that from Conanicut to Newport, Bristol Ferry, the ferry at Warren, and the ferry across the Seekonk. Carter also objected because the printer in New London extracted all the news from the mail, printed it, and sent it by private messenger to Providence twelve hours before the mail over the ferries could reach that town, which, of course, greatly interfered with the success of the *Providence Gazette,* which was published by Carter. According to Finlay, one reason for the maintenance of the circuitous mail route, and for the slowness of the service, was the political pull of Peter Mumford, the post rider, who neglected his post business to look after his private affairs. Of course, during the occupancy of the Island of Rhode Island by the British, the mail route between Boston and New York had to be through Providence and East Greenwich and was never returned to Newport.

After the close of military operations in 1780 a post road was opened between Tower Hill and Newport over the South Ferry. Mail continued to be carried in this way for the next century. It is said that Amos Gardner, son of the Amos who purchased the ferry in 1773 and who lived in the "four chimney house", about three quarters of a mile west of the ferry, carried the mail for many years. In February, 1799, S. J. Potter and others presented a petition to the general assembly for a stage route from the South Ferry to Pawcatuck (Stonington), but there is no evidence that it was ever granted. There was, however, a stage advertised to run between Newport and



From a painting of the South Ferry landing in South Kingstown, in possession of Captain J. Lester Eaton. The cat-boat was used for several years after the large ferry-boat was abandoned. The large boat in the picture is the freight sloop. The slanting wharf for the ferry-boat is well shown.

New London in 1800. According to Harford W. H. Powel, stages ran from Kingston Station to the South Ferry until the Civil War. After the large sailing boats were taken off, about 1870, Capt. J. Lester Eaton rode over to Wakefield four times a week to get the mail and carried it over to Jamestown in a cat-boat, which served as a ferry boat for about fourteen years. It was very seldom that ice or bad weather prevented his making the passage.

There were three ways of going from Bristol to Boston, one was through what is now Barneyville, over the then Miles Bridge, or Great Bridge. This road was originally laid out in 1688, but in April, 1716, a committee was appointed to lay out a better road from Bristol to Boston without crossing any ferry. The old route was the one usually followed by Judge Sewall in his journeys between Boston and Bristol. Occasionally the Judge varied his course and crossed the ferry in Warren, into Phebe's Neck in Barrington, and then to Rehoboth. He says "tis a pleasant Road and but little further". The third route was over Kelly's ferry into New Meadows Neck in Barrington and thence to Rehoboth. This was the post road in 1792, presumably so in 1773. Which of these routes was followed by the early post riders we do not know, but it certainly did not pass through Providence. In 1773 the route did pass through Providence, and probably over Kelly's Ferry, for Finlay, the surveyor of post roads, refers to the "skow" ferry at Warren. Another road from Boston to Newport, was through Taunton and over Howland's Ferry. After Stone Bridge was built in 1794 this route must have cut into the travel over Bristol Ferry.

Anderson's Rhode Island Almanac 1772 and 1773-4 describes the route from Newport to New Bedford as over Fogland Ferry.

Poor Character of Roads

Although the South Ferry, from Conanicut to Narragansett, was in operation probably several years before 1700, the travelers, including the post rider, must have made their way over private roads, or paths, up the hill, and down to Narrow River and it was not until 19 June, 1716, that John and Jeremiah Smith deeded a road, four rods wide, to the King and Country, across Boston neck, from the ferry to Narrow River. This road was accepted by the general assembly. It was a highway "for his Majesty's subjects to pass, and repass in, with their carts, wagons or carriages". In 1892 the writers, with much discomfort, rode over this steep and rocky highway down to the ferry-boat, and we wonder what the road must have originally been, which, after two centuries of improvement, was scarcely fit to drive over. When the general assembly dedicated this road to wagon traffic it must have been thinking of the future, rather than of the present, for wagons were uncommon at that time, but carts must have been in quite general use, for on a plat of Jeremiah Smith's land made in 1720, a detour from this road near the ferry is marked "cartway". This is the detour followed by the writers in 1892 and by countless other travelers to avoid the steep lower portion of the hill. It is curious how often our ancestors laid out highways straight up the steepest hills when slanting roads would have been so much easier for the traffic. The road up from the ferry in North Kingstown was equally steep, and those at Bristol Ferry and Providence were almost as bad. When these roads first began to be traveled, wheeled vehicles were unknown, and the grade was not so serious a matter for the traveler on foot, or for the horseman.

The North Ferry was established in 1707, but there is no reference to any highway in Kingstown until 14 August, 1747, when a petition therefor was presented to the general assembly. A plat was made, but apparently a highway was not laid out, as there is none up to the present time. During 1775 the regular ferries at the southern part of Jamestown were destroyed and were not operated during the war. It is probable that, until the evacuation by the British in 1779, the North Ferry was the chief means of communication, as in the almanacs of 1775 and 1776 the western road to East Greenwich and Providence is given as over this ferry. As in many other places, so in Barrington, the roads leading to the ferries were not laid out until after the ferries had been in operation many years.

To us it seems remarkable, how long people put up with gates in the highways, even in roads leading to the ferries, which were for the most part the principal roads of the times. There was a gate in the road to the Narrow Passage Ferry in Providence, as late as 1739. In 1736 Capt. Davis was allowed to place gates in the road in Barrington, which led to Martins Ferry, and two years later, James Adams was permitted to put gates in the same road. In October, 1717, the Smiths petitioned the general assembly that they could not immediately fence out the road and more time was given them and they were ordered to make convenient gates in the road to the South Ferry, which they had deeded to the King, and keep them well hung, fit for the passing of carts, horse and foot. The deed of the Bristol Ferry highway, 16 June 1690, permitted the occupant of the ferry farm to hang a gate at his own expense at the entrance to the town, but not to obstruct travel.

Wheeled Vehicles

According to Weeden, rude carts were fairly common in the early part of the eighteenth century, but chaises and "chairs" did not come into common use until the middle of the century. Perhaps the ferry-keepers were slow in adapting their boats to the transportation of such vehicles, for the first reference to them in the legal prices for ferriage was in the act of 1743. Wealthy people rode in wheeled vehicles much earlier, but rarely went far from the large towns. Apparently the road from Boston to Newport, must have been superior to most of the country roads, or it would not have tempted Governor Winthrop to drive from Newport to Boston in 1699 in a calash. The calash was a heavy two-wheeled vehicle, usually drawn by one horse, but the Governor evidently had a pair. Sewall writes, "Sept. (27). Governor sets out for Boston, pole of the calash broken by the horses, frighted by the Pistol. The making of a new one takes up an hour or two. Dine at Mr. Brenton's at Bristow Lodge at Rehoboth. (28) Set out at 7 mane. Dine at Billings. Set out at 2. Get to Dedham about 5. After a little Recruit leave the calash there. Governor rides on horse back." Perhaps the Governor had tired of driving over the rough roads, or it may be the pole had not been properly mended. It is evident from this account that the ferry-boat at Bristol Ferry must have been large enough to transport the calash.

The passable character of this road encouraged the early establishment of a stage route between Boston and Newport. On 15 October, 1716, a stage-coach was to set out every fortnight from the Orange Tree Inn in Boston to Newport in Rhode Island while the ways are passable "to be performed at reasonable rates by Jonathan Wordall of Boston and John Franklin of Newport". Probably the travel was over Bristol Ferry though it is not so stated. According to an advertisement in the Boston News Letter a few years later, a stage-coach was run from Boston to Bristol Ferry every two weeks. It was to leave Boston at five o'clock Tuesday morning and reach the ferry at noon on Wednesday. It would there meet the people coming from Newport and returning would reach Boston Friday night. The fare was twenty-five shillings per person. It appears from the above that the coach was not carried over the ferry. On 27 October, 1736, Alexander Thorp and Isaac Casno of Boston petitioned the general assembly for an exclusive franchise for ten years for a stage line from Boston to Newport. This was granted. They were to have two coaches with twelve horses and were to build a coach house on each side of the ferry, showing that the coaches were not to be ferried across. They expected to invest £1,200. The coaches and harnesses would have to be imported from Great Britain. According to a note in the *Boston Gazette* for April 25, 1737, the coaches were imported as promised.

The first mention of wheeled vehicles in rates of ferriage was in 1743, when a charge of three shillings was made for a horse and chair, or chaise, on the ferries leading to Rhode Island. Wheeled vehicles were occasionally carried before that time, as we know was true of Governor Winthrop's calash in 1699, but they were not an important part of the traffic until after the middle of the eighteenth century. In 1750 a four-wheeled chaise is referred to.

Although the stage-coaches of the lines from Boston to Newport, established in 1722 and 1736, did not cross the ferry, and probably stage-coaches did not do so for many years, it seems probable that they were carried at Bristol Ferry and from Newport to Jamestown after the horse boats were put on. It is said that about 1825 the horse boat at Slade's Ferry began to carry stage-coaches and that Isaac Fish ran coaches from Boston to Bristol and Newport over the ferry. In the rates of ferriage for the Newport horse boat in 1828 the charge for a stage-coach was to be $0.75. In 1800, according to an advertisement in *The Newport Mercury*, the Assurance Mail Coach was to leave Newport for New London, Monday, Wednesday and Friday and the South Ferry at eleven A. M., arriving at New London on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at two P. M., Fare $3. The wording of this advertisement certainly suggests that the coach, starting from Newport, was carried over the ferries, though it scarcely seems possible that it could be so carried in the sailing boats of that day.

In 1833 a petition to the general assembly alleges that the rate of ferriage for a horse and wagon and for a horse and chaise at Bristol Ferry is too high. It might have been reasonable years ago, it was said, but owing to the great increase in traffic it could be lowered. On the other hand a petition of the owners of the ferry states that the business of the ferry had decreased for thirty years and that the steamboats from Newport to Providence and from Fall River to Providence had taken away much business. The committee to which these petitions were referred reported, 30 January, 1834, among other things, that the old law had no rates for stage-coaches, private coaches, barouches and many other pleasure and useful carriages and curricles of modern date. Bicknell, nearly all of whose statements about ferries we have verified, says that the stage-coaches from Bristol to Providence went through "Barneyville" and over Fuller's Ferry at India Point, until, in 1792, the rope ferry set up by Duncan Kelley made it possible for them to be transported over his ferry to New Meadow Neck. In the early forties of the nineteenth century the advertisement of the stage line from Newport to Providence states that "There is now a new horse-boat at Bristol Ferry which makes crossing much more expeditious and pleasant."

The ferry act in the revision of the statutes in 1844, fixing the rates of ferriage, mentions coach, barouche, wagon, four wheel carriage chaise, or sulky, carry-all or pleasure carriage, wagon hung on springs, and ox wagon, or cart. Most of these rates apply to Bristol Ferry only, indicating that there was much more traffic of this kind across Bristol Ferry than across the Newport-Jamestown and Kingstown Ferry. The Misses West, now owners of the Bristol Ferry Estate, tell us that a whole circus was once transported across that ferry. The elephant, of course, was too large for the boat and was obliged to swim. Pedlers' wagons are nowhere named in the rates of ferriage, but they must frequently have been carried over the ferries. The ferry commissioners, in their report, January, 1860, state that the ferry-boats were too small to carry the pedlers' wagons, which were larger than formerly. Capt. Ellis, too, told us that he very often carried pedlers' wagons between Newport and Jamestown.

First Paved Street

Even in the principal town of the colony the street leading from the ferry was considered the most important thoroughfare, as is shown by the following records of the general assembly sitting in Providence, July, 1715:—

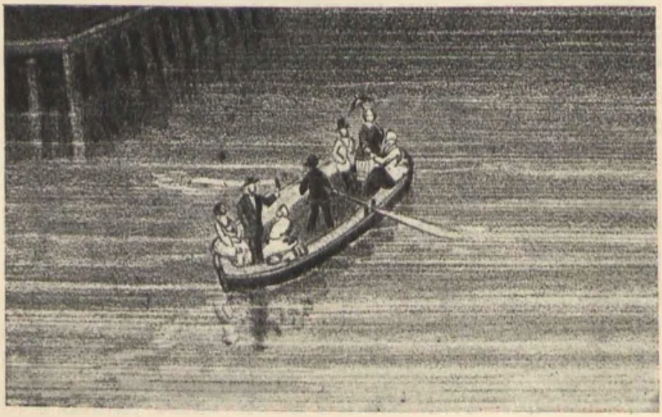
"This Assembly, taking into consideration that Newport is the metropolitan town in this colony, and that all the courts of judicature within this colony are held there; and also, that it is the chief market town in the government; and that it hath very miry streets, especially that leading from the ferry, or landing place, up to the colony house so that the members of the courts are very much discommoded therewith, and is a great hindrance to the transporting of provisions and etc. in and out of the said town, to the great loss of the inhabitants there of ;—

Therefore, be it enacted by this present Assembly, and by the authority there of it is enacted, that the sum of £289.17.3. now lying in the naval officer's hand, (being duties paid to this colony for importing of slaves), shall be, and is hereby granted to the town of Newport, towards paving the streets of Newport, from the ferry place, up to the colony house * * * "

Some years later, in October, 1734, when a ferry had been established at The Point, a petition was presented to the legislature to appropriate money to repair the great bridge leading to The Point for the use of the town and also because of the strangers, drovers and travelers that come over The Point Ferry with horses, cattle, hogs, etc. Money was appropriated for this purpose that year and in 1735 and in 1736. In 1737 a petition was presented asking that the street leading to this ferry be paved.

Ferry-Boats

It is fair to surmise that the first ferry-boats were rowboats, or perhaps, even canoes. From the mutilated records of the town of Portsmouth it may be inferred that Thomas Gorton, who was chosen ferryman in 1640, was permitted to use a canoe until the ferry-boat was built. The ferries in Providence River, from the foot of James Street, and from India Street were rowboat ferries. We well remember the boats at James Street, which were large, substantial, round bottom boats, pointed at both ends and capable, as we remember it, of carrying a dozen passengers. There was a seat extending all the way around the boat, the ferryman stood facing the bow, and rowed with crossed oars. One of these boats is shown, though not very distinctly, in the accompanying illustration. It is our recollection that at India Street, at least for a part of the time, a schooner's long boat was used, instead of the style of boat employed at James Street. The ordinance establishing this ferry referred to the use of skiffs. At Howland's Ferry, in 1718, a rowboat was regularly employed, for the general assembly ordered that Daniel Howland have the two men that attend the ferry in his rowing boat exempted from training.



James Street ferry-boat, Providence, about 1849, as shown in a large lithograph of Providence from the west side of river, owned by Rhode Island Historical Society.

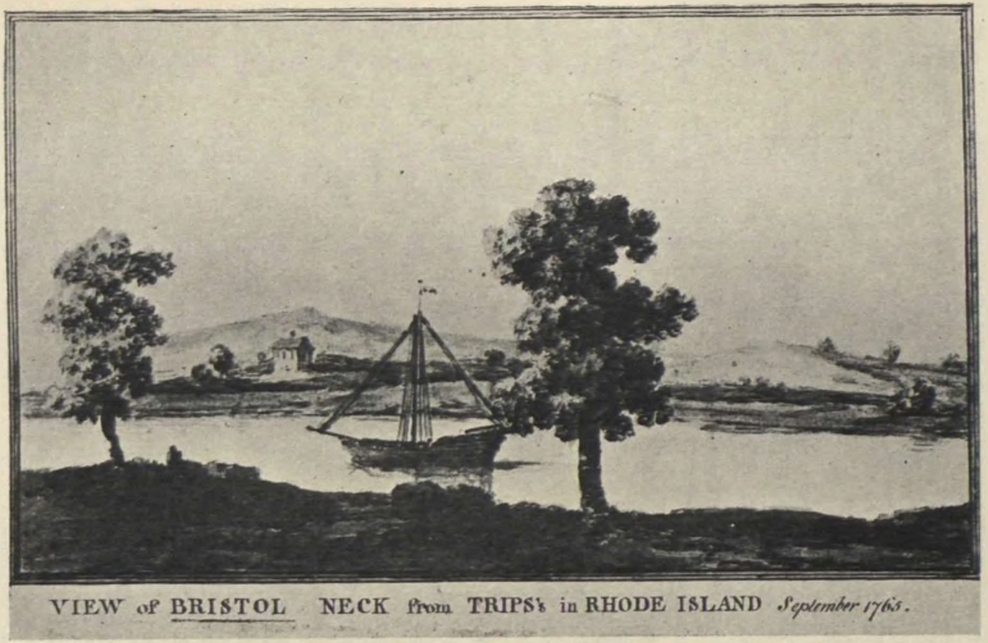
Perhaps this was one of the "two ferry-boats with oars" mentioned in the inventory of the estate of his father, Daniel Howland, 26 February, 1711-12. About 1830 the proprietors of Bristol Ferry found it necessary to keep two rowboats, valued at $25.00 each, as well as two sailing boats, and a boat propelled by horse power. It is said that rowboats were operated on this ferry as late as 1887, after other boats had been abandoned. For his ferry across the Blackstone river, Jeremiah Whipple was, in 1710, required to have a sufficient boat for men and horses. Doubtless this was a scow, as scarcely any other kind of boat would have been suitable for transporting animals across such a stream.

The towns and the colony took part in the establishment of ferries, chiefly for the purpose of encouraging the construction of boats large enough to transport horses and cattle, thus Richard Bullock was to provide a horse-boat at the ferry at Rehoboth in 1664, and it was a horse ferry that Josiah Arnold was to operate between Jamestown and Narragansett in 1700. Although, by far the larger part of the important ferry traffic was carried on in large boats, it is probable that most of the ferries kept a small boat or two to use in an emergency, or to transport one or two passengers, when there was no wind to fill the sails and the water was smooth. John Sanford, who was the proprietor at what is now Stone Bridge, after Thomas Gorton, and who died in 1653 left, according to his inventory, besides "the great ferry boat and tackling" a canoe valued at ten shillings. The Smiths at the South Ferry in Narragansett in 1696 agreed to find a boat, or canoe, for the ferry. We know that Mrs. Edmonds who owned the ferry at Narrow Passage, had a canoe, for she loaned it to her neighbor, Thomas Patey, who fell overboard and was drowned, 19 August, 1695. One night Judge Sewall was late in reaching Providence from Bristol, and he wrote, "T'was duskish before we got over the ferry. At first two women rowed the boat and fetched some over." It is probable that at Martin's and at Carr's Ferry at Warren a rowboat was used, perhaps exclusively, though scows might have been employed also, for in Caleb Carr's inventory, 13 July, 1767, two small scows are mentioned and one ferryboat, the latter valued at £3. This could have been scarcely anything more than a rowboat. Bicknell says that foot passengers were carried over this ferry within the memory of persons now living. After Kelly's bridge was built, half a mile above this ferry, in 1794, there must have been less need of carrying horses and vehicles and probably a rowboat would suffice. Until the steam ferry-boats were put on the Conanicut ferries, it occasionally happened, during a period of calm, that the ferryman could be induced to row an anxious traveler across in a small boat kept for the purpose, and sometimes, when the sailing boat was becalmed, the passenger would be willing to lend a hand at the great oar, and help bring the boat to the wharf with "a white ash breeze". Thus Dr. Alexander

Hamilton traveling westward from Newport, 24 August, 1744, says "I had a tedious passage to Conanicut. It being quite calm we were obliged to row most of the way". All the ferry-boats were, in later years, required to carry oars, as was voluntarily done a century before, and also had to be provided with a boat-hook. Capt. Eaton says that the oars were eighteen feet long, and a bill dated 21 January, 1841, is for thirty-six feet of oars at eight cents per foot. This was at Narragansett Ferry.

Sailing Boats

The standard type of boat used on the principal ferries of the bay, was, without doubt, an open, jib and mainsail boat, of about thirty to thirty-five feet in length. The accompanying illustration is a picture of Bristol Ferry taken from a painting of 1763. The boat there shown, may not have been the ferry-boat, but it certainly much resembles the boats used in the nineteenth century of which several illustrations are given. S. Schuyler Hammett of Cranston Street, Newport, Rhode Island, has an interesting oil painting, twenty by twenty-four inches, of the ferry-boat from Newport landing at the wharf in Jamestown. A number of men in top hats and women with wide skirts are seen on the wharf just as they have come from market day in Newport. It was painted about 1840. The older boats must have been as large, or larger, for we read of one between Little Compton and Portsmouth, in 1714, which carried twelve horses. Capt. Hicks says that the last boat to run from Portsmouth to Bristol was larger than most of the ferry-boats, being about forty feet in length. It had room on the deck in front of the mast for two vehicles. Benjamin Ellery's boats, in 1798, were rated at thirteen tons. The boat on the Bristol side of Bristol Ferry, in 1684, was provided with sails and on the Portsmouth side the inventory of the estate of Abiel Trip, 10 September, 1684, mentions a ferry-boat and cloth for sail valued at £15. During the next fifty to seventy-five years many deeds of ferry property refer to the ferry-


VIEW of BRISTOL NECK from TRIPS's in RHODE ISLAND September 1765.

Bristol Ferry showing the ferry house in Bristol. Crown Collection of American Maps, British Museum. Plate loaned by the Rhode Island Historical Society.

boat, mast, sails and rigging. They probably had no topmast, certainly the more modern ones did not. Captain Eaton and Captain Ellis tell us that the ferry-boats last in operation on the Jamestown ferries, were about thirty-five feet long and fourteen feet wide and drew four and a half to five feet of water. The timbers were very heavy, and they were planked with two inch oak. They were open in the middle where the animals were carried. The cross beam, called the front beam, which separated the passengers from the live stock, was hollow. The pump was fixed to the centre of this and the water from it would run out through the hollow beam to one side, or the other, according to which tack the boat was on. There were seats along the after part for the passengers and occasionally the latter would be drenched, for the rudder post was not grooved, so that there was always a little space, through which the water was likely to squirt up in heavy weather. The tiller was very long; someone said jokingly "as long as a wagon tongue". There was a small deck in front of the mast, where a wagon could be taken on, though it was, more or less, in the way of the jib, even when the latter was tied up a bit. Captain Ellis told how, when a pedler's wagon was taken on board, the jib would pound upon the wagon and rattle the tinware every time the boat came about. The most recent boats appear to have had only a small open space under this deck, but it must have been different in some of the older boats. Thus, in 1756, in a memorandum of ferry-boat expenses, we find a charge for "Room furrwood fer passengers £60". In 1839 there was a bill for fixing the forecastle of the ferry-boat at the South Ferry. The great ferry-boat and tackling left by John Sanford, at his death in 1653, was valued at £20. It was probably a sailing boat though it was not so stated. When Jonathan Marsh of Jamestown died in 1704, he left two ferry-boats, one on the east side, and one on the west side of Conanicut Island. The former was valued at £30, and the latter at £15. When Josiah Arnold died in 1725 his ferry-boat, called new in 1721, was inventoried at £75. In 1736 Samuel Clarke complained that it would cost £200 to build a new ferry-boat, but at this time the currency had depreciated to perhaps a third of its former value. In 1780 George Irish was authorized to pay $400 in specie for a ferry-boat to be delivered to Mrs. Franklin.

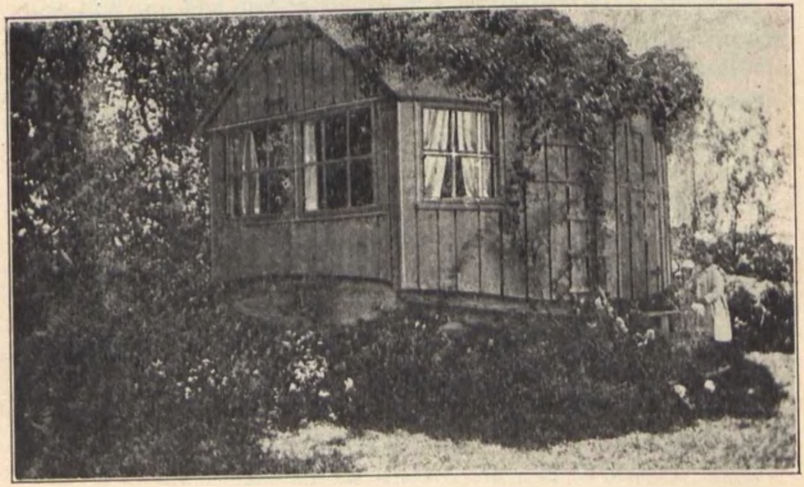
Apparently in the olden times boats were frequently greased, presumably as a protection against worms, for in the boat bills of 1756, above referred to, was an item "tallow to grease the boat 9 times 8s. each time—72." In the ferry bills for 1839 tallow had given place to verdigris as a protective. In order to facilitate the loading of live stock the gunwale of the boat was cut down about a foot for a space about two and one half feet long. This space was filled in with a heavy oak plank which was removed when animals were to be taken on board. A gang plank, with cross pieces, to insure good footing, led from the gunwale down into the boat and on this the animals were forced to descend. After loading, the gang plank was removed to make more room for the live stock. As will be shown, the wharves were built in a slanting manner, or with successive levels, so that the opening in the side of the boat could be brought just level with the wharf.

How soon it became customary to paint the boats we do not know, but in 1747, William Martin alleged that it cost him £12 to paint two boats. Sometimes, in later years, the boats were painted in a somewhat fanciful manner. Thus Harford W. H. Powel, of Newport, writes us that one of the boats plying between that city and Jamestown had a row of painted portholes along the side like a miniature man of war.

These sail ferry-boats had to be provided with ballast and naturally stone was used. Dr. Hamilton, on riding down to the ferry landing in Jamestown with his negro servant, 16 July, 1744, writes, "as we stepped into the ferry-boat there was some stones lay in her bottom, which obstructed the horses getting in. Dromo desired the skipper to 'trow away his stones, de horse be better ballast'. 'No,' says the fellow, 'I cannot part with my stones yet; they will serve for a good use at another time'. A high authority in the Church relates that once when Bishop Griswold was in haste to fulfill an engagement at the

Narragansett Church he had to cross the ferry in a gale and was obliged to lie stretched out in the bottom of the boat to serve as ballast. This tale must be apocryphal, for no sailor would ever put "live ballast" in the bottom of the boat, but on the windward rail where it would be far more effective.

The last sail ferry-boat on the Newport-Jamestown ferry, ended her days as the home of an instructor in boxing near the Lime Rocks in Newport. When the sail ferry from Jamestown to Narragansett was abandoned, the boat was decked over and made into a freight boat called the *Boaz.* The last of the old style boats on the South Ferry was, in December, 1876, laid up by Captain Eaton upon the sand of Eel Cove, just north of Parting Beach in Jamestown. Thus came to an end the long line of ferry-boats which began with that of Thomas Gorton in 1640, and which served the public so well for 250 years.



"Peggoty." Old ferry-boat used on Taggart's Ferry. Now a studio on lawn of Sydney R. Burleigh, Little Compton. Photograph by Mr. Burleigh.

Occasionally smaller sailing boats were used. After the large ferry-boat on the ferry between Jamestown and the South Ferry was taken off, about 1875, a catboat was put on, and in this boat, which is shown in an illustration under "Post Routes," Captain Eaton carried the mail four times a week for fourteen years. A catboat was also used at Bristol Ferry some forty years ago.

During its later history, at least, Taggart's Ferry had no "horse boat", but a smaller craft was used by the farmers for carrying the butter, eggs, poultry, etc. to the Newport market. The last boat used for this purpose, now made into a studio, is spending the remnant of its days on the lawn of Sydney R. Burleigh, in Little Compton. It is named *Peggoty*.

Apparently very few of the sail ferry-boats were dignified with a name. The earliest ferry-boat that we have found that had a name, was one called the *Hawk* on the Narragansett Ferry, which was sold by John Franklin to Amos Gardner in 1773. Either this boat, or another one of the same name, was sold to Elisha R. Potter in 1819. In 1798 the two boats on the ferry between The Point in Newport and Jamestown were the *Patty*, Clark Remington master and the *Martin*, John Remington master. Perhaps the *Patty* was named by Benjamin Ellery for his daughter Martha, who afterwards became the wife of Christopher Grant Champlain. Philip Caswell who owned the last sail ferry-boat plying between Jamestown and Newport called it the *Sea Serpent*, but the name was not painted upon it. Captain West's boat at Bristol Ferry was the *Mt. Hope*.

Scow Boats

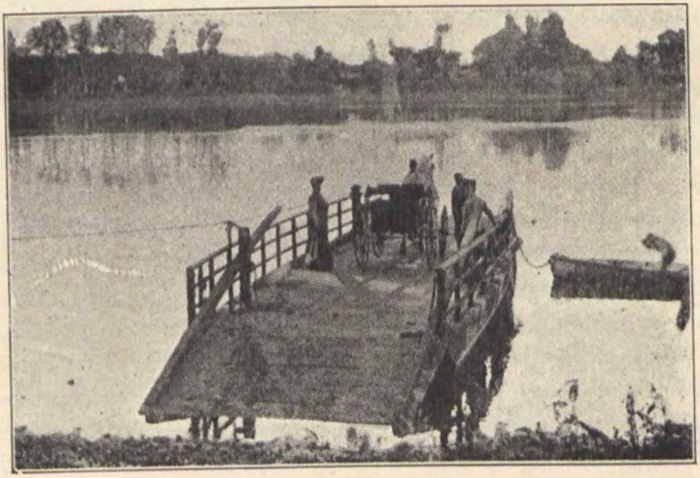
Undoubtedly, the country over, the scow was the most common type of ferry-boat. In narrow and shallow rivers it was far more suitable than anything else. No landing was needed, for it could be brought close to the shore, and by means of a gang-plank, the embarkation of horses and vehicles was easy. In shallow quiet streams it could be poled across, or oars might be used. By far the most common means of getting the boat back and forth was a rope stretched from bank to bank. These rope ferries were operated in various ways.

Scows are the cheapest of all boats, and the rope ferry is easy to manage, and its operation does not depend on fickle breezes, but a rope ferry can only be used where the passage is comparatively narrow, and the scow is useless in rough water. Hence something more seaworthy was needed on most of the Rhode Island ferries. Nevertheless, there were some scow and rope ferries, though just how many, we are uncertain. One would pick out the site of the present Red Bridge as a suitable place for a rope ferry. Welcome A. Greene, in his account of the ferry at Narrow Passage, though he does not definitely say that it was a rope ferry, says it may be described as follows, and then goes on to explain how a rope ferry is operated. Kendall, an Englishman who traveled in the United States, in 1807-8 writes "over the Patucket, on the road to Rehoboth, a bridge is at present building; meanwhile communication is by a rope ferry". The first bridge which was built in 1793 was carried away in 1807 and the ferry referred to by Kendall was a temporary one, but it is probable that the earlier ferries at this place were also rope ferries.

After the Great Bridge in Providence was destroyed by the September gale, in 1815, a temporary ferry was set up and it was ordered that a "scow be provided and that a hawser be stretched taut across the river for the conveniency of handling the same back and forth".

Kelly's Ferry was another suitable place for a rope ferry, but the only definite evidence we have found about it is an act of the general assembly, in June, 1792, which gave Duncan Kelly, proprietor of the ferry on the east side of the town of Barrington, on the Post road, from Newport to Boston, permission to extend and continue a warp from posts erected upon opposite sides of the river, for the greater convenience of transporting passengers. Whenever a vessel should pass, the warp must be "doused" so that the vessel shall pass without obstruction. Whether this was the first time a rope was used at this place we do not know. If so, it was not used long, for the bridge was built about three years later. Possibly Hugh Finlay's reference to the "skow" ferry at Warren, in 1773, was to this ferry, but more likely to Martin's Ferry just below. According to DeCorny's letter, during the Revolution, scows were used for transportation at Fuller's Ferry Providence, at Warren and Bristol, but nothing is said about ropes, and there certainly could not be a rope ferry at Bristol Ferry. A rope might possibly have been used at Fuller's Ferry and at Martin's Ferry. In the inventory of Josiah Fuller's estate one item is "scow and oars £7". This suggests that, at times, at least, the scow may have been rowed across. Perhaps these large military scows were propelled by oars, or were towed by other boats. Bicknell says that stage-coaches were carried across Fuller's Ferry. This could scarcely have been unless scows were in use. There is other evidence that scows were commonly used on Martin's Ferry. When Robert Carr, keeper of the ferry died in 1722, he was possessed of a wood boat valued at £30, a long boat £7, a scow boat £12 and a canoe fifteen shillings. The wood boat was doubtless a small sloop used for transporting firewood. The scow was probably used for transporting animals over the ferry and the long boat and canoe for carrying foot passengers. When Samuel Humphrey, the ferryman on the opposite side, died, in 1732, he left a ferry-boat and thirty-five bushels of corn valued at £21.10.0. This could have scarcely been anything more than a scow, for at that time a bushel of corn was worth about four shillings. In the estate of Caleb Carr, owner of the east side of this ferry, who died in 1767, was one ferry-boat valued at £3, which suggests that it was a flat-boat.

There are various ways of operating rope ferries. Sometimes, as appeared to be the case at Kelly's Ferry, the rope is stretched high up, so as to keep it as much as possible out of the water. At other places, presumably where the distance is longer, the rope, for the most part, lies on the bottom, simply passing over the ferry-boat, where it can be hauled upon by the men. Usually there is a block, or pulley, at either end of the boat, through, or over which, the rope passes. On most rope ferries, the boat is moved across by the ferryman hauling on the rope. Sometimes the boat is carried across by the current of the river. The boat is attached at either end to a trolley on the rope. When the boat is to start from the shore, the outer end of the boat is hauled close up to the rope, while the end of the boat nearest the shore is allowed to sag off, when the current, striking the boat slantwise, pushes it forward, just as the wind striking a sail slantwise, pushes the boat forward. No description, or pictures, of Rhode Island rope ferries have come down to us, but existing ferries in other places are probably not very different from our own ferries. An illustration of one of these modern ferries is here given. Other illustrations of ferry-boats may be found in Cassiers Magazine Vol. VI. Aug. 1894, p. 275. The "flaps" spoken of by DeCorny can be seen at the ends of all these modern boats.

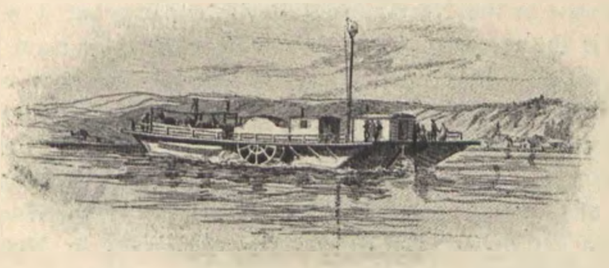


Bissel's Ferry, Windsor, Connecticut. From *Crossing The Connecticut.* In operation since 1648. Doubtless the ancient rope ferries in Rhode Island closely resembled this Connecticut ferry.

A variation of the rope ferry was operated in Westerly during the early years of the present century. A chain was used instead of a cable. It lay on the bottom of the river and passed over a sprocket wheel on the boat. The wheel was turned by a gasoline engine.

HORSE POWER BOATS

During the early period of the ferries the term "horse boat" signified a boat capable of transporting horses. With the beginning of the nineteenth century, there came into use a type of boat propelled by horse power which was called a horse boat, or team boat. The first reference to this in Rhode Island, was when a petition was presented to the general assembly, at the June session in 1823, asking for the establishment of a horse boat at Bristol Ferry. The charter was granted in January, 1824, and the Rhode Island Steam and Team Boat Company was organized. Horse boats had previously been used on the New York ferries across the North river and they proved so satisfactory there that the earliest steam ferry-boats could not compete with them, for we read that, in 1812, Col. John Stevens withdrew from the Hoboken Ferry the first steam ferry-boat, in favor of the more convenient team boat. About this time Fulton built a steam ferry-boat, which did prove successful. These horse, or team boats, were used quite generally throughout the United States. Lindsay, writing in 1876, says that such boats were used at Quebec up to a very recent date. Soon after the granting of the charter above re-



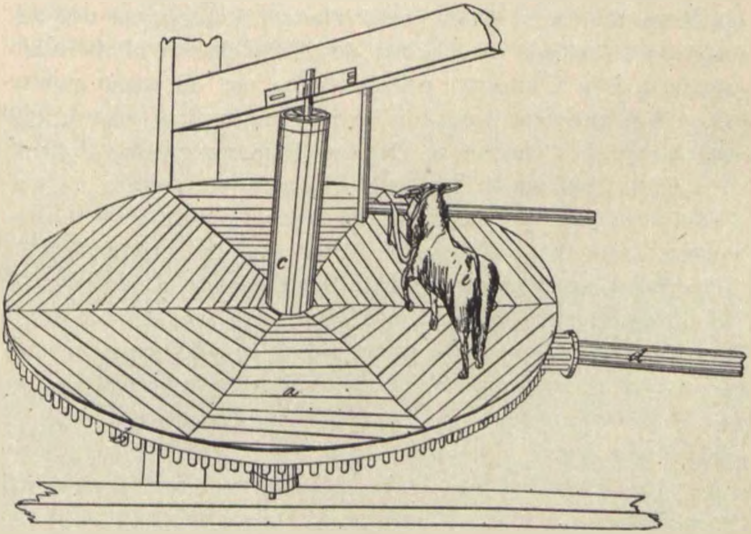
Team boat used on Hudson River about 1812. Probably, though much larger, this was much like the horse boats of Rhode Island, of which no picture was found. From Cassier's Magazine, VI, August, 1894.

ferred to, a horse boat was built for Bristol Ferry, and continued in operation until 1845.

In June, 1828, George Engs and others, petitioned the general assembly, that the proprietors of the ferries between Newport, Jamestown and South Kingstown, be required to put on one steam, or team, boat on each ferry, and also keep one sailboat, or else permit the petitioners to establish ferries as aforesaid. As a result, the Narragansett Bay Company was chartered, and a horse boat built, and put in operation, though exactly when we do not know. The charter provided that the boat must be in operation by October, 1829, and we know that, 18 June, 1829, Thomas R. Congdon sold his ferry place in Jamestown to the Narragansett Bay Company, but it was to revert if the company ceased to operate a horse, or team, boat. The company must have ceased to operate the boat before 15 September, 1830, for, on that date, the ferry wharf was transferred to Congdon by the Narragansett Bay Co. Perhaps the ferry was in operation in May 1830 for the stockholders were, at that time, to pay an assessment to George Knowles, between the Ferry and Horse Boat Wharves in Newport. Mason has what purports to be a picture of this ferry-boat, but it really is a picture of the *Experiment*, the steamboat built in Providence in 1793.

There is no known picture of a Rhode Island horse boat. There were at least two types of horse boat machinery. In one the horse worked a treadmill, similar to that commonly used to operate threshing machinery before the advent of the gasoline engine. By far the most common type of machinery was a great revolving circular platform on which the horse, or horses, traveled. An inclined shaft went up through the centre of the platform, which was attached to it and cogs on the rim of the platform turned a shaft, which operated the paddle wheels. The accompanying illustration shows this machinery. This is from the specifications for a patent, granted to Moses Isaacs and John Milbank, 14 October, 1817. The horse boat at Bristol Ferry was built at the Ferry, and was a scow, square on deck, with the lower part rounded at the ends.

A large disk extending across the boat, formed the wheel, on the outer edges of which, the horses trod, being at the same time hitched to posts stationary in the deck. The hull of this boat cost $1300 and the machinery $525. Four horses were used and the work was so severe that they had to be replaced frequently. It was hoped that this boat would entirely displace the sailing boats, but it was found to be impossible to operate it in rough weather. The wharves had to be extended and changed, to suit this kind of boat. Doubtless the horse boat was considerably more expensive to operate than the sailing boat and complaint was made that it was laid up too often and the sailing boat substituted for it. A horse boat like this proved more successful in the smoother water at Slade's Ferry at Fall River, where it was in operation within the memory of many persons now living. The proprietors of Bristol Ferry complained that much traffic was diverted from them over Slade's Ferry and Stone Bridge.



Design for horse boat machinery. Isaac's and Milbank's patent 14 October, 1817.

The horse boat between Jamestown and Newport, was undoubtedly the same kind of boat as that at Bristol Ferry, for Henry B. Tucker of Jamestown recalls that his mother told him that the horses walked on a great flat wheel. She crossed on the boat many times.

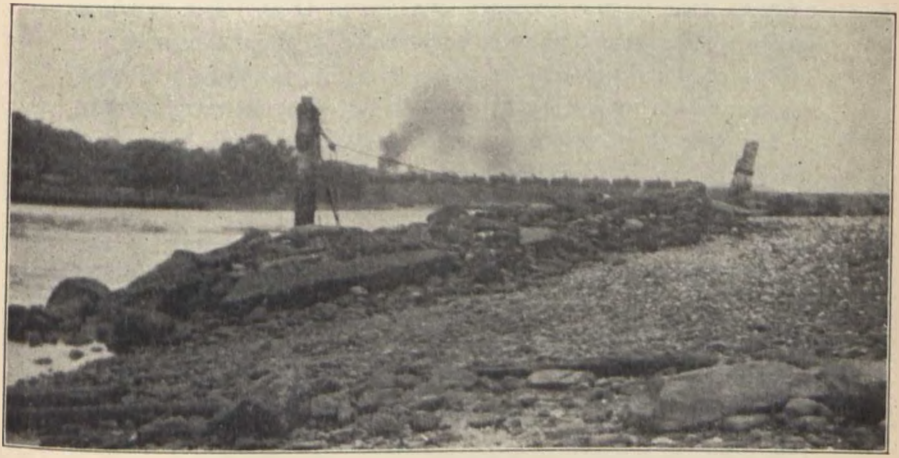
STEAM FERRY-BOATS

The use of steam power on the ferries was discussed quite early, for the charter of the Bristol Ferry Company in 1823 permitted the use of steam power, though horse power was actually used instead. In October, 1827, the charter of the Narragansett Bay Company, permitted the use of steam power only. Evidently the company became sceptical of steam, and secured another charter in October 1828, permitting the use of a horse boat which was only in operation a year, or two. The first steam ferry-boat was the one used to transport passengers from the Boston and Providence Railroad station at India Point, to the Stonington Railroad station on the opposite side of the river. This was in 1837 and the boat did not carry cars, but only passengers and goods. In 1839 another and larger boat was put on. She drew only three feet when loaded. On 17 February, 1864, the Narragansett, Conanicut and Newport Steam Ferry Company was incorporated. At the same time, a charter was granted to the Newport and Jamestown Steam Ferry Company. Nothing was done under these charters, and it was only when financial assistance from the town of Jamestown was secured, that a steam ferry became possible. The *Jamestown* made her first trip 12 May, 1873. There is no need of describing the steam ferry-boat as all are familiar with it, but a number of illustrations are given of the boats used on the different Rhode Island ferries.

Besides the New York type of double ended ferry-boat, which has been used on both sides of Conanicut, at Bristol Ferry, and temporarily at Stone Bridge, while the present structure was under construction, other types of boats have been used, as shown in the illustrations. The excursion style of boat is not suitable for carrying automobiles or other vehicles, but it is entirely satisfactory for foot passengers. Such a boat is used on Bristol Ferry in the winter time and when the regular ferry-boat is "out of the way". Steam or gasoline, launches have been used on the Pawtuxet-Riverside and on the Bristol-Prudence ferries.

FERRY LANDINGS

Until the advent of the steam ferry-boat made necessary the "rack" made of piles and planks, against which the ferry-boat strikes, the landing places were probably of stone. Certainly all those now in existence, and the remains of many more, were built in this way. We have found no reference to the use of piles in the old wharves, but frequently logs seem to have been built into the stone work to strengthen it. Such may be seen to-day in the remains of the landing at Red Bridge, at Bristol Ferry, Cook's Ferry, Pearce's Ferry, and were observed by one of us, years ago at Martin's Ferry. Capt. J. Lester Eaton says that logs were found in the old ferry wharf on the west



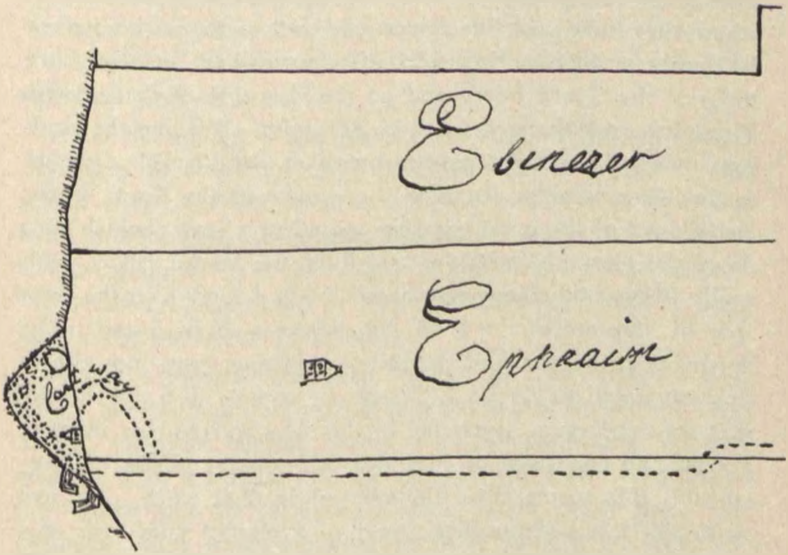
Remains of ferry wharf just south of Red Bridge, Providence. The two logs in near foreground formed part of landing used before bridge was built in 1793.

side of Jamestown. He says that he never heard of the use of piles in olden times and never saw their remains in old wharves, but that crib work filled with stones was a common form of construction. In the bill for the repairs on the colony's piers, in 1748, was an item for forty-five cords of "pines". Whether this refers to logs to build into the landing or for something else, was not stated, but they probably were for crib work. In February, 1744, it is recorded by the Proprietors of Long Wharf in Newport that 800 cords of pines were used for that wharf. We are not familiar with the term "cords of pines" but it seems probably that it refers to logs.

A description of how our French allies in the Revolution thought a ferry landing should be constructed is given in DeCorny's letter to the general assembly, in 1780. The existing landings show that they were constructed in about that way.

One of the characteristic features of the landings was that the top of the wharf was not level, but was slanting, so that at any tide the ferry-boat could come up to some part of it where the wharf would be level with the gunwale of the boat. This was necessary to facilitate the loading and unloading of animals and vehicles. This construction can be seen in the South Ferry landing, and is shown in the illustration of the ferry-boat at the wharf in Newport. According to the old ferrymen, a gang-plank was kept on the wharf to make easier loading and unloading. It was often necessary to put blocks under one side of the gang-plank to make it steady. According to DeCorny, the French commissary of war, the scows which were used for transportation across the India Point, Warren and Bristol ferries were provided with "flaps" at each end, that could be let down for convenience in disembarking carriages.

Where many of the ferry landings were situated, it was likely to be very rough, so that the boats needed some protection from the sea. The most complete and protected landing was at the South Ferry. The present landing at this place has almost exactly the form of that shown on a plat of the ferry place made in 1720. There one substantial wharf extended out at right angles to the shore, and, as the shore curved around, another was built at nearly right angles to meet it, leaving only a narrow opening to a perfectly sheltered basin. This was sufficiently large to permit of three schooners being laid up there for the winter. At other places, shelter was secured by two nearly parallel wharves, or perhaps one would be turned, or bent. Pearce's wharf at Bristol Ferry was quite an extensive and complicated affair and afforded good protection although there was no real basin. It was stated by the proprietors of Bristol Ferry that it cost $6500 to build the wharves on both sides. Several of the old deeds refer so explicitly to wharf and pier that it seems as though there must have been some clear distinction, though we have not been able to find this brought out by any definition. We have suspected that the wharf was the landing place for the boat on the shore and that the pier was a sort of protection, or breakwater. Cer-



Part of plat of South Ferry farm, belonging to Ebenezer and Ephraim Smith, made in 1720. Plat owned by William Davis Miller.

tain plats in Jamestown showing the ferries referred to in the above mentioned deeds, seems to substantiate this view.

Repairs on Landings

The old stone ferry wharves and piers on the exposed shores of the bay were quickly destroyed by the sea so soon as they were abandoned, leaving merely long heaps of rocks just awash at low water. Such may now be seen at Bristol Ferry (both sides), Howland's Ferry, (Tiverton side) and at Cook's Ferry, where they have probably remained about as they are now for 100 years or more. Examples of wharves kept in repair are those at the South Ferry and on the east side of Jamestown. These have not changed much in 200 years. Keeping the landings in repair was a constant source of considerable expense to the ferry owners. In 1738 the owners of the South Ferry complained of the great expense caused by a storm which beat down the piers and wharves and filled the landing place with sand. When the colony purchased the two ferries on the west side of Jamestown, in 1748. the wharves were found to be much out of repair, and the bill for putting them into condition amounted to £765.5.0. though, of course, in a greatly depreciated currency. Included in this was an item for thirteen gallons and one quart of rum and five pounds of sugar. Presumably this was to cheer the laborers in their work. As each workman received the better part of a pint of rum each day, it would appear that they ought to have been sufficiently cheered.

In 1764 John Franklin applied to the general assembly for permission to hold a lottery to raise £300 lawful money, that he might add forty feet more to his pier at the Narragansett terminus of the South Ferry, so as to afford better protection in bad weather. The lottery was allowed. During the Revolution the ferry wharves in South Kingstown, and on the west side of Jamestown, were entirely destroyed. The proprietors of Bristol Ferry state that it cost $175 to repair the wharf after the storm which sunk the horse boat in 1830 and that the annual charge on account of wharf repairs amounted to $125.

There were numerous complaints about sand filling in around ferry landings and decreasing the depths of the water. This must have been a serious problem for the ferry owners and we have come across nothing to show that they had devised any means for solving it. Whenever a wharf, or pier, is built out from the shore, wherever it is at all rough, the action of the waves drives the sand about it and shoals the water. This was the situation of most of the ferry landings on the shores of the bay. To remove stones which were upon the bottom, or were knocked off of the wharves by the waves, or ice, tongs of different sizes were used.

After the advent of the steam ferry-boat, in 1873, it became necessary to construct ferry landings after the pattern with which all are familiar, that is, a slip formed of a rack on each side, built of piles and planks into which the boat runs up to a floating stage. It is interesting to note that the first successful steam ferry-boat built by Robert Fulton had a landing place built substantially in this manner.

In the comparatively quiet waters of Providence River, where the rowboat ferry plied between James Street and Ship Street, elaborate landing places were not necessary. Simple wooden steps led down into the water. There was a railing in the middle and the ferry-boats came up on either side. We remember that when we were children there was a float attached to the steps at which the landing was made, though later it fell into disuse. On the wharf (as was required by the board of aldermen in 1843) was a little square flat roofed building which served as a waiting room. This was a favorite place for the loafers of the neighborhood to spend their leisure time watching the ferry-boats come and go, and sometimes accidents would happen. One of us recalls that an employee of her father's, while passing along the street, one summer afternoon, hearing cries of distress rushed to the landing just in time to rescue a man from drowning. He had undertaken to row himself across in one of the ferry-boats, but had fallen into the water.

Ferries in Heavy Weather

The sailing boats which, for so long, were the chief means of transportation across the ferries, were substantial, staunch and seaworthy craft, as is illustrated by the successful voyage of a runaway servant in one of these boats almost to the West Indies. It is inconceivable that it would be dangerous for them to venture across the bay except on the rarest occasions, and yet it is no unusual thing, to find travelers make note that they were delayed on account of the wind. Thus Sewall on his journey to Newport, 14 September, 1699, found the wind so high, that he could not get over Bristol Ferry. James Birkit, in October, 1750, was detained several hours on the west side of Conanicut for the same reason. Dr. MacSparren, too, rode to Bristol Ferry, 25 October, 1751, expecting to cross "but the wind blowing hard we took our horses out of the boat, and lodged at Bordens. We crossed Bristol's ferry (Bordens) the next day". On 29 October, Dr. MacSparren returned to Narragansett over the ferry and the next day makes this note: "Wednesday, Octr. 30th cold and windy with the wind at Northwest. I thank God I came yesterday since I could not have crossed the Ferrys with so much wind agst me." Finlay says "the two ferrys from Rhode Island over to Narragansett, are each three miles and a half over; in winter when the wind is ahead, with floating ice, it is both very difficult, and exceedingly dangerous to pass, and sometimes tho' but seldom the course of the Post is stop'd for a week, this does not happen above twice or thrice in a year." Finlay certainly exaggerated the length of the ferries and perhaps he did the length of delay. It seems a fair conclusion that these boats were so heavy and sluggish, that if it was necessary to reef during a high wind, it was impossible for them to sail fast enough, or close enough to the wind, to make any headway, if there happened to be a strong head wind and head tide, particularly if it was rough. The last of the sail ferry-boats were probably somewhat of an improvement over the ancient craft, though the men who sailed them tell us that even these were very slow in working to windward. It was rare indeed, they say, when they considered it too dangerous to cross, though they realized the discomfort of a rough passage more than their would-be passengers, who sometimes attributed to cowardice the advice of the ferryman against making the passage. Capt. Job S. Ellis of Jamestown, who sailed Philip Caswell's ferry-boat back and forth to Newport, delights to tell of three Providence men who came to Conanicut Island with a wad of money to buy sheep and cattle. They made few purchases, and were soon ready to return, but it was then blowing so hard that Capt. Ellis told them that they would be drenched to the skin, and otherwise made uncomfortable. When they suggested that he was afraid, he said "come on." They had not gone very far from the wharf when the passengers, not being used to the water, became greatly alarmed at the pitching of the boat and the seas that came aboard. They offered Ellis their money, and a gold watch and chain, to be set back on the island, but Ellis had started for Newport on their demand and to Newport he would go, which he did. Mrs. Gill of Jamestown, daughter of I. Bowen Briggs, one of the later owners of the ferry to Narragansett, tells how one of their ferrymen, being taunted by an Indian woman, a basket seller, to set her across during a heavy southwest gale, determined to give her a fright, and set out with more sail than he should have carried. When he got out from under Fox Hill, he had to put in another reef. Anyone who knows about boats, knows how uncomfortable a small craft is, under such circumstances. The ferryman expected that his passenger would be frightened within an inch of her life, but she had calmly stowed herself under the little deck forward, had lighted her pipe, and was taking things easy.

Even those who are quite familiar with the water may get into difficulty through ignorance of the peculiar ways of ferry-boats. The writers, traveling with a horse and buggy many years ago across the South Ferry in the little steam ferry-boat

Jamestown, did not know that it is necessary, when in rough water, to unhitch the horse and tie him crosswise to the boat, otherwise it is almost impossible for the animal to maintain his footing on the rolling boat. Our horse was greatly frightened and several times nearly lost his footing on the wet and slippery deck. On the return trip the horse was properly fastened and there was no trouble.

The really great gales, of course, did much damage to boats and wharves. It is said that the great gale of 1815 wrought such havoc with the wharves of the North Ferry between Conanicut and North Kingstown, that the ferry was then abandoned. The September gale of 1869 sunk, at her wharf at Newport, the ferry-boat belonging to Samuel Carr, and the mate boat, belonging to Philip Caswell of Jamestown, had its boom broken and spars and sails otherwise damaged.

Ferries and Ice

Even nowadays, Narragansett Bay is sometimes frozen entirely across, and before the days of steamboats, this must have happened fairly often. A letter from Newport, dated 12 January, 1719-20, stated that the last week was as extreme cold weather as has ever been known and Bristol Ferry has been frozen so that men came over on the ice. Such weather was not so very uncommon in the olden days, for we read in Daniel Howland's diary that, in the winter of 1739-40, Bristol ferry was frozen from December 23 to January 10, so that people walked across on the ice, and it was frozen again in 1747. When the ice was sufficient to stop the ferry-boats, and was yet not strong enough to bear horses, it must have caused great inconvenience. In his petition to the general assembly, 20 February, 1738-9, for a ferry from Tockwotten over to Caleb Lyons farm in Watchemoket, Daniel Abbott stated that it was the place that seldom freezes so much as to keep a ferry-boat from passing. Hazard says that in 1740 the bay was soon frozen over and that people passed from Providence to Newport on the ice. Ferry traffic from Narragansett to Newport was suspended. Occasionally, however, the ice broke up sufficiently for the ferry-boat to go over to Fox Hill, though it could not reach the usual landing place in Dutch Island Harbor, where, of course, the ice would be more solid and last longer. In 1780 the bay was so solidly frozen that wood was sledded across both ferries from Narragansett to Newport with ox teams, a distance of some six miles. Wood sold for $30 a cord in Newport and poor people had to burn doors and partitions to keep from freezing. Floating ice is always a great hindrance to sail navigation. Capt. Ellis told us that one winter afternoon, while on the passage from Jamestown to Newport, the ferry-boat was caught in drifting ice and was carried out as far as Brenton's Reef Light Ship and he did not succeed in extricating himself until morning. A woman passenger nearly perished from exposure. In former times floating ice was sometimes even more disastrous. In December, 1742, the ferry-boat, while crossing the Seekonk River from Providence to Rehoboth, was struck by a cake of floating ice and, as a result, four men, two boys and a horse were drowned.

Even in modern times it is not always possible to keep Narragansett Bay open. During the exceptionally cold winter of 1918 the bay was frozen before Christmas so that the ferry-boat could not make her passage between Bristol and Prudence and no boat was able to reach the island until February 8, when the steamer *Sagamore*, of Bristol Ferry, carried provision and grain to the inhabitants and their live stock. During this period Mr. Murray Chase, brother of Capt. Halsey Chase, carried the mail. He used a light skiff which he dragged over the ice and rowed across the open water. He was injured while getting down from the wharf at Prudence and developed erysipelas from which he died at the Providence City Hospital.

Other serious accidents than those due to ice and storm sometimes occurred as will be referred to in the account of Forbes Ferry. The boat on that ferry, in April, 1714, ran on a rock and sank with the loss of two men.

FERRIES PROFITABLE

Except during the periods of great inflation, and during and just after the Revolution, ferries appear to have been profitable, for the government no longer had to offer inducements for people to go into the business, but petitions for franchises were frequent and competing ferries were many times established.

We know very little about the profits of the ferry business in its best days, for the few financial statements that we have found, were prepared to show that the rates were inadequate to yield a fair profit. That they were profitable can hardly be doubted, when a man like Deputy Governor Daniel Abbott of Providence, a wealthy land owner and distiller, was so anxious to secure a ferry franchise, when three generations of Ellerys of Newport, rich merchants, owned a ferry for a long period of years, and the Howlands kept their ferry for a century, and the Carrs, theirs for nearly 200 years.

VALUE OF FERRIES

The prices paid for some of the ferry properties, as well as the rentals, indicate in some degree, the value which was set upon them. In 1810 the West Ferry property in Jamestown was sold for $6,000 and included a small house, wharf, boat and four or five acres of land. In 1833 the ferry property on the east side of the island was sold for $7,000. Bristol Ferry, including the farm of 84 acres, changed hands in 1859 for $13.000. In 1773 John Franklin mortgaged the South Ferry property, containing 105 acres, with houses, wharves and boat, for 9,000 silver dollars and in 1788, after a law suit, he redeemed it for something over £3,800 lawful money, at which time the inflation was nearly fourfold. In 1818 a third interest in this ferry was sold for $3,333.33. In 1865 the property was sold for $25,000 to Joseph Eaton, Jr. At this time the farm contained 150 acres. It is said that Benjamin Cottrell, who kept the ferry from Narragansett to Jamestown in the forties of the last century, and for the rental of which he paid

$500 a year, managed to save the sum of $10,000 with which he purchased the Fox Hill, or Beaver Head Farm, formerly owned by Josiah Arnold, an early Jamestown ferryman. There was a bar under the waiting room of this ferry house and it is not impossible that a considerable portion of Cottrell's profits came from this source. Indeed it seems likely that, in most instances, the profits of the bar, the board and lodging of travelers, and the opportunities for trade, which the ferry traffic afforded, were very important sources of revenue. Benjamin Hazard, who hired the Jamestown-Conanicut Ferry from 1856 to 1865, paid an annual rental of $1,000. After Hazard gave up the ferry business he built a hotel at Warwick Neck.

Receipts from Ferry Traffic

Scarcely any accounts have been found which give ferry receipts and these were prepared for the express purpose of showing to the general assembly how meagre they were. William Martin, in February, 1747, asked to have the rates of ferriage raised and presented his accounts to show the necessity for it. This was the time when the ferries were having much trouble, owing to the inflation of the currency. Martin had recently purchased the two ferries from Jamestown to North and South Kingstown. He showed the receipts of these ferries by weeks, twenty-nine weeks for the North Ferry, amounting to £59.16.0 and twenty-four weeks for the South Ferry, amounting to £97.0.6. Martin said that he gave half his profits, probably meaning half his receipts, to his ferrymen and that he did not have enough to pay for repairing his wharves on which he had expended £64.13.0. He said that the ferrymen could not maintain themselves owing to the high cost of living. It is little wonder that the colony was obliged to take over these ferries a few months later in order to keep them running.

In 1833 some of the inhabitants of Bristol attempted to secure a reduction in the rates of ferriage over Bristol Ferry. The owners of the ferry, Messrs Pearce and Gifford, presented a counter petition to the general assembly in which they alleged that they were making only four percent on the capital invested. The legislative committee to which the matter was referred, reported that the net income of the ferry was only $500 a year.

When ferry receipts were to be divided between two owners, it was sometimes the custom for one owner to take the receipts for one period and the other to take them for the following period. In January, 1695-6, John and Jeremiah Smith, who had recently purchased a square mile of land in Narragansett, agreed to establish a ferry to Jamestown. One was to keep it one year and the other the next. If one gave it up the other was to pay twenty shillings for the privilege of the ferry and the wharf. Welcome A. Greene, in his account of the ferry at Narrow Passage, Providence, says that the owner of the Providence side took all the receipts one week and the owner of the Rehoboth side all the receipts the next week. From a petition of Caleb Fuller, we learn that, at the lower ferry, between Rehoboth and Providence, at Watchemoket, it was customary for him and Oliver Fuller, who owned the ferry together, "to improve the ferry in turn every other week". The Misses West tell us that, at Bristol Ferry, their father, Capt. West, would, at the end of the week, give the money he had taken in during the week to Capt. Hicks, who operated the ferry from the Portsmouth side, and the next week Capt. Hicks would give his receipts to Capt. West. Another method of equalizing ferry receipts will be referred to in the account of the ferry from Jamestown to South Kingstown.

FERRY EXPENDITURES AND CAPITAL COSTS

The account of the capital invested in Bristol Ferry and also of the running expenses for a year, as presented by the owners, are given below, but the above named committee reported that the accounts of the ferrymen were not kept in a satisfactory manner. However, the committee did not think that the ferry rates should be reduced.

On the second Monday of June, 1736, Samuel Clarke, of

Jamestown, in a petition to the general assembly, alleged that the expenses of his ferry for the past six years had been about £100 a year, and the receipts had never been above £130 a year.

The following memorandum of ferry expenses is attached to a petition of several ferry owners in 1753 for an increase in the rates of ferriage. It is apparently in the handwriting of William Ellery.

"Charges at the Ferry.

Ferryman that tends the boat £4 per week 52 weeks	£208
Ferrymans Board £5 Pr. Week 52 Weeks	260
To Room Furwood Vc fer the passangers	60
Tallow to grease the boat 9 times 8s. each time	72
To 1 man 9 days besides ferry man	9
To 1 Carpenter 1 day	2.10
	£511.10
To Cordage fer Fasts & sp. Sheats etc	40
To wear of Sailes & repair of Boat	40
To oars & pols	15
	606.10"

There evidently are some clerical errors in the original memorandum, as the figures are, either not set down correctly, or else are not added correctly, but it is the only account of this period which we have found and it has two or three interesting items.

The following is the account, above referred to of the expenses at Bristol Ferry.

Bristol Ferry

Capital Outlay

"Cost of two houses for ferrymen at $900	$1,800.
Wharves both sides	6,500.
Horse boat wharves	930.
Horse boat hull	1,300.

Horse boat machinery	525.
Four horses	210.
Two large ferry boats at $575	1,150.
Two row boats at $25	50.
	$12,595.

Yearly Expenses.

Interest on capital invested at 6 percent	$755.70
Two men to tend ferry at $12 per month	288.
Board of men at $2 per week	208.
Additional help in bad weather equal to half one man's time	124.
Board of four horses at 50 cents	730.
Repairs on horse boat	50.
Repairs on large boats	110.
Repairs on row boats	10.
Repairs on wharves	125.
Depreciation	200.
	$2,600.70"

The total, though not correct, is as it appears in the petition.

Foot Passengers

The transportation of persons must have always furnished a large part of the ferry business. Many times travelers went on horseback and later in wheeled vehicles, but probably the majority traveled on foot. The exclusive use of rowboats on the later ferries over Providence River, over Warren River and at Bristol Ferry, and their frequent use on many other ferries, indicate the importance of foot travel. Most of the rates of ferriage begin by specifying the rates for "footmen" or "single persons". As we have seen rules were made against overcrowding the boats on the James Street-Ship Street ferry in Providence and we remember that these boats were crowded to the limit at the rush hours so that passengers had to wait their turn. On holidays and other special occasions the old sailing boats, too, were filled with passengers. Capt. Eaton tells us that so long as the sail-boats ran on the South Ferry, people used to begin to gather at the ferry landing, even before sunrise, on "Election Days" so that they might be sure to reach Newport in time for the festivities. The statement made by Nicholas Northup, in 1747, that vast quantities of people went over the North Ferry, should perhaps be taken with a grain of salt, as Northup was trying to obtain favors from the general assembly for such an important ferry.

Horses and Cattle

As has been stated, one reason why the towns and the colony took part in the establishment of the early ferries was to encourage the building of boats large enough to transport horses. As travel, when not on foot, was chiefly on horseback during the seventeenth and a large part of the eighteenth centuries, the transportation of horses must have been a very large item of the business of the ferries. The rates of ferriage fixed for the ferry between Portsmouth and Pocasset, in 1640, do not mention horses, but the rates for 1647 and thereafter do. In 1640 a rate is given for "goats and kine". So early as 1651, the exportation of cattle from the Island of Rhode Island had apparently begun, for, June 3 of that year "Mr. John Sanford and Francis Brayton are chosen to view the cattle that are transported of the Iland at the Ferry". In 1647 the rate of ferriage is fixed for horses and "great beasts" and for sheep, goats, hogs, and calves. The transportation of live stock was one of the chief functions of the sail ferry-boats so long as they continued to ply. Newport rapidly became an important port for the exportation of live stock and salt meat to the West Indies and the southern colonies. Cattle were no longer exported from the Island except in seagoing ships, but were imported from the adjoining mainland and from Jamestown and the Narragansett country. In 1734 repairs were asked for the bridge at Newport which led to the Point Ferry, because of the strangers, drovers and travelers that came over the ferry with horses, cattle, hogs, etc.

Reference will be made to the over-crowding of the Narragansett ferry-boats in 1747 with horses, hogs, sheep and cattle. It will also be noted how necessary the ferry-boats were to bring sheep and cattle to Newport during the Revolution and what precautions were taken to prevent their seizure by the British. Even so late as the sixties of the last century, according to the old ferrymen, the transportation of cattle and sheep to Newport from Jamestown and from western Rhode Island and Connecticut was an important part of the ferry business. One of us well recalls crossing from Jamestown to Newport with a boat load of sheep on one of the old sailing boats. There was a sheep pen close by the landing at the South Ferry where the sheep were herded while waiting for the boat. Benjamin Ellery, in his petition to the general assembly, 17 June, 1768, stated that he had built a hog-house at his ferry on The Point. A plat of Long Wharf, Newport shows a hog-house adjoining the ferry lot.

Baggage and Freight

Travelers baggage, farm produce and other merchandise were, of course, often carried in the ferry-boats, but do not seem to have formed a very important part of the traffic. The right of travelers to carry a certain amount of baggage and goods with them, without extra charge, has always been a bone of contention between travelers and common carriers. This right was established by the general assembly, when it was enacted, in 1747, that no ferrymen shall take anything for such bags, packs and tubs as passengers shall carry on one horse, or on their own persons, either as they go to or return from market. It was apparently the custom for passengers to carry a varied assortment of goods, for 17 October, 1724, Tobias Brown was fined twenty shillings for carrying two bags containing two butter tubs and a pig on the Sabbath to his house in Tiverton from the ferry (viz. John Howland's). When the inhabitants of Jamestown, in 1702, asked for liberty to transport themselves and neighbors in their own boats, they asked for the privilege of transporting their goods and clothes also. The first mention of goods in rates of ferriage was in 1706-7, when the rate for goods at Fogland Ferry was fixed at 2 pence per cwt. This was of course then in Massachusetts. The first reference in Rhode Island to freight traffic was in 1767 when the rate for heavy goods was established, varying at the different ferries.

Undoubtedly the most valuable cargo ever transported in a ferryboat was when David Gifford, keeper of Bristol Ferry, in 1775, on the approach of the British, for eighteen shillings, carried the colony records in his boat from Bristol Ferry to Providence.

Rates of Ferriage, Men and Horses

From the establishment of the first Rhode Island ferry in 1640, until the present time, rates of ferriage have been fixed by town, colony, or state. Some of the details relating to these rates are not without interest. We have found some thirty-five different acts and regulations fixing ferriage and some of them contain many items, which, at the same period may differ at the different ferries. To save expense it has been thought best not to print all these tables, but a copy of each has been filed with the Rhode Island Historical Society.

An examination of these tariffs will show that there were decided changes of opinion as to the relative rates for a man and for a man and horse. Often, as in 1706-7, 1712 and 1715 the same charge was made for a man as for a man and horse. On the other hand, in 1704, 1710, 1724, 1738, 1740, and 1746, the rate for a man and horse was considerably greater than for a man alone, being in the later years, twice as great. From this time on, it was generally the custom to make a separate charge for man and for horse, the rate being the same for each, though, after 1798, the charge for a man and horse was somewhat more than double that for a man. In 1756 there was some discussion as to the proper charge for a spare, or led, horse. Several of the ferry owners alleged that it was unfair for patrons of the ferry to pay only half as much for a horse as for a horse and man. They said the price should be the same as it is more trouble to look after a horse if his rider does not go with him. As a result of their petition the rate of ferriage for a single horse was made the same as for a man and his horse.

In the tariff of 1756 the term "draft horse" appears for the first time and the rate is the same as that for a man and horse. Presumably then, a draft, or drift, horse, as it was variously called, is the same as a spare, or led, horse.

The following curious item is found in the tariff for Fogland Ferry, 1706-7, the interpretation of which must be left to the reader. "For one single man and horse eight pence, for one double horse & where a female it is one, but where there are two, or more, men & horse, then sixpence for each horse, double, or single, and sixpence for a single person".

Another oddity in the ferry charges was that in 1844 the price for a wagon on steel springs was fifty cents and when hung on leather thorough-braces the price was thirty-five cents. Capt. Hicks relates that a thrifty old man on The Island would transfer his wagon from springs to leather when he had occasion to go to Providence by way of the ferry, thus saving fifteen cents.

The principle that when there was more than one passenger in the boat a lower per capita charge should be made, was followed in the tariff of 1640, 1647, 1712 and 1715, and in 1747 it was provided that, if any ferryman, who goes in a boat with sails, shall, at any time, put off, or carry, a single footman over his ferry, he shall have and be paid double ferriage.

RATES FOR LIVE STOCK

The charge for cattle, commonly called "neat beasts," was always considerably more than for horses. Sometimes it was more than twice as much. In the later years there was more refinement in the charges. Thus in 1760 the charge for a neat beast, over two years old, on the Newport-Jamestown-Kingstown Ferries was twelve shillings, old tenor, though if the neat beast was under two years, the rate was ten shillings. At the same time the charge for a calf was only three shillings. There seems to have been no statutory definition of a calf and, in the absence thereof, it may be surmised that there must often have been considerable argument as to just when a calf became a "neat beast". The relative charges for the smaller animals seem to have varied in a somewhat erratic manner. Sometimes the rate for a hog was higher than that for a calf and sometimes the rate for a calf was higher. In 1761 the rate for a sheep was three shillings and for a lamb, two shillings, but in 1844 the charge was the same for both, but no charge was made for a lamb with a ewe. In 1640 goats and kine were carried at the same rate.

Rates at Different Ferries

If one examines the different tariffs it will be noted that the rates on the different ferries do not bear much relation to the length of the ferry, except, that, in general, the rates on the very short ferries, as the Providence and the Warren ferries, were almost less than on the much longer ferries between Newport and Narragansett. In 1750 the rate for a single person at Bristol Ferry was one shilling, just the same as on the Newport and Narragansett ferries, which were four or five times as long. On the other hand the rate for a horse at Bristol was one shilling, while it was three at Newport and the rate for cattle at Bristol was two shillings and sixpence, as against three shillings at Newport. It is very likely that the amount of traffic had a good deal to do with fixing the rates, but, when we find that three years earlier the charge for cattle and horses was just the same at Bristol and Newport, we cannot help thinking that perhaps political influence had much to do in shaping ferry rates.

Results of Depreciated Currency

A great amount of trouble developed in the ferrying business from the expansion of the currency. It happened that the period during which ferries were developing most rapidly was the period of paper money inflation. Previous to 1700 money was scarce and its purchasing power high, especially for farm products. In 1670, in Rhode Island, pork was threepence per pound, butter sixpence, wool one shilling, and wheat five shillings per bushel.

Soon after the opening of the next century the colonies began to issue paper money in great quantity, its purchasing power, of course fell, and prices soared. The first issue in Rhode Island was in 1710. Previous to that, silver had been worth six or seven shillings an ounce.

As the rates for ferriage were fixed by law, the ferry owners began to suffer so soon as wages and prices rose owing to inflation. They naturally sought relief, as common carriers have done under similar circumstances in our own day, by appeal to the rate-making authority. In July, 1726, Job Almy appealed to the court of general sessions for an increase in the rates of ferriage at Fogland Ferry, which, at that time, belonged to him and was then within the colony of Massachusetts. The court granted him an increase of fifty percent.

The first attempt to raise the rate of ferriage in Rhode Island seems to have been in 1737, at which time the owners of the ferries between Newport, Jamestown and South Kingstown petitioned the general assembly for an increase in rates, as they had been to great expense in repairing wharves and piers, and all sorts of goods and labor were rising, while the ferry rates had remained the same for twenty years. At this time the inflation amounted to from 300 to 400 percent. Some increase was granted, but it was probably less than 100 percent, for the rate for a single person in 1712 was eight pence and it was only increased to twelve pence in 1737.

In 1743 an act was passed raising the ferriage on several other ferries, making it comparable with that on the ferries running west from Newport. In 1747 another act was passed regulating ferriage. In some instances, especially as regards wheeled vehicles, the rates were decidedly increased, while in a few instances they remained the same.

As it required from forty to fifty shillings in paper to purchase an ounce of silver at this time it is not to be wondered at that the ferrymen became discouraged at a raise in rates merely from eight pence to twelve pence and paid little attention to the operation of the ferries. It was at this time that the service became so bad that the colony, for the purpose of improving conditions, purchased the ferries from Jamestown to South and North Kingstown.

The tariff was again revised in 1750, raising the rates, especially for live stock and vehicles. In 1752 there was another decided raise.

Between 1752 and 1756 the currency had depreciated so rapidly that whereas in the former year, three pounds would purchase a Spanish milled dollar, in the latter year it required five pounds and five shillings. It is not surprising, therefore, that the owners of the Newport-Jamestown and Kingstown Ferries again petitioned for an increase in rates, alleging that provisions of all sorts, as well as canvas, rigging, iron work, tallow and all other necessaries, had risen to more than double the prices they stood at when the last act for regulating the prices of ferriage was passed. In June a committee was appointed to consider the circumstances of the ferries and whether it would be reasonable to raise the price of ferriage and if so, how much. The rate for a single person was raised from two shillings to three shillings, for a man and horse, from four shillings to six shillings, for cattle, from four shillings to eight shillings, and for small animals from sixpence to one shilling sixpence. On the whole the raise in rates fully compensated for the depreciation of the currency between these two tariffs. Nevertheless, three shillings in the paper money of 1756 was not nearly so much as eight pence in 1712, when there was only very slight inflation. Evidently these rates did not satisfy the proprietors of the ferries, for, in a petition, March 1757, Benjamin Sheffield of Jamestown alleged that the ferry owners obliged people to pay double the lawful price. The rates on the other ferries were also increased in 1756. Other increases followed in 1760 and 1761.

War Prices

The maximum legal rates were reached in October, 1779, when the charge for a single person on the Newport ferries was nine shillings. The following January it required twenty-nine paper dollars to purchase one silver dollar, and by June, the depreciation had a good deal more than doubled. It is not surprising that no attention was paid to legal rates and that the ferrymen charged what they could get. On 16 May, 1780, Ezra Stiles paid fifteen dollars for ferriage across the South Ferry at Narragansett. Under the date, 30 May, 1780. Stiles makes this entry in his diary (p. 427) "Ferriage round Canonicut 50 doll. pd. Franklin 25 doll. lodged at Tower Hill". Perhaps John Franklin happened to have his ferry-boat in Newport that day, which would explain why Stiles was ferried "round Canonicut" to Franklin's landing in South Kingstown, instead of passing over the two regular ferries and across the island of Conanicut. The "25 doll." which he paid Franklin was, perhaps, for his supper, as $25 was at that time equal to only about 37 cents. In July, 1780, Claude Blanchard crossed from Bristol to Rhode Island and writes "We were obliged to pay 12 livres for the passage of a ferry boat: they asked 30 of us."

Because of the depreciation of the currency, a committee was appointed in July, 1780, to report on the rates of ferriage, but there is no record that any action was taken at that time.

The climax of these nominally high ferry rates seems to have been reached in the following year. In March, 1781, General Washington paid a visit to Newport, crossing the ferries from Narragansett and returning by way of Bristol Ferry and Providence. He was accompanied by General Howe and two aides with, of course, their horses. For ferriage across the South Ferry the charge was $288 and the same from Jamestown to Newport. The charge at Bristol Ferry was $240 and at Providence Ferry, $96.

Deflation soon followed and in June, 1782, it was enacted that the prices for ferriage at the different ferries should not exceed fifty percent more than it was in 1757.

RATES AT BRISTOL AND NEWPORT

The following shows the rates of ferriage for a single person at Bristol Ferry and between Newport and Jamestown at different periods.

Year	Bristol Ferry	Newport and Jamestown Ferry
1669	6 pence	
1712		8 pence
1715	8 pence	
1723	3 pence	
1724	3 pence	
1737		6 pence
1740		6 pence
1743	1 shilling	
1746		6 pence
1747	12 pence	12 pence
1750	1 shilling	1 shilling
1752	1 shilling 6 pence	
1756	5 shillings	3 shillings
1760		4 shillings old tenor
1761		6 shillings old tenor
1767	3 pence	4 pence
1779		9 shillings
1798	8 cents	10 cents
1822	8 cents	10 cents
1844	8 cents	10 cents

FREE TRANSPORTATION

In the early history of the country, when money was scarce and everyone was obliged to be as saving as possible, it was but natural that they should try to obtain free transportation when they could. Even in our own time, with far less excuse, passes are often a scandal.

Some of the earliest legislation relating to ferries concerned this subject, that is, it provided that certain persons should be carried free. Thus in May, 1690, it was voted that "the person Riding Post, and all Officers and all others Traveling Backward and Forwards upon the Public Service of the Colony" should be carried free at all seasonable times. According to Welcome A. Greene, who gives no reference, but who was a careful historian, Andrew Edmonds, the keeper of the ferry at Narrow Passage, demanded fare of Henry Stacy the king's post. Stacy refused, and Edmonds brought suit and obtained judgment. Shortly after this, Edmonds died and his widow demanded judgment of Stacy, but he appealed to the general assembly, which remitted the judgment and again made the post free.

AN EARLY ACT

In May, 1699, the general assembly believed that it had settled the matter of passes for legislators, by means of an enactment which is herewith printed in full, as it throws some light on the question of unlicensed ferries previous to the beginning of the eighteenth century.

"Whereas, the Magistrates, Deputies, and Jury, are put to considerable charge, in passing the ferries, between Newport, Jamestown, and Kingstown, they being upon his Majesty's service, and there being no act or order of his Majesty's Assembly of the Collony, that those that use the trade of ferrying between the said towns shall carry the Magistrates, etc. ferry free:

Be it therefore enacted by this assembly, and the authority thereof, That from and after the adjournment or dissolution of this Assembly, which shall first happen, that all, or any person or persons, following the trade of ferrying or keeping a boat or boats for that end and use, between said Newport, said Jamestown and Kingstown, and all other ferries in the said Collony, shall carry all Magistrates, Deputies, Jurymen, and all, or any other persons being upon his Majesty's service relating to this, his Majesty's government, ferriage free.

And if any said ferrymen, or those using the trade or following that employment shall refuse or neglect to carry any of said persons ferriage free; and that without any stop or delay, if wind and weather will permit, the said person or persons so refusing or neglecting, shall, upon proof there of, made before any of his Majesty's Assemblys, be made incapable, and prohibited from using the said trade, or following the said employment for the future. And others, that will be more observant, shall be licensed, and allowed to keep the said ferry upon the aforesaid terms."

In the controversy between Edmonds and Stacy, Edmonds, the ferryman, seems to have been at fault, but at other times the postmen tried to get the better of the ferrymen by asking for free ferriage when they were on their own private business, for we find that, in August, 1752, the part of the ferry act relating to post riders was amended by providing that they should be carried free "in riding their Stages".

Colony to Pay Ferriage

Probably other ferrymen were as grasping as Edmonds and tried to exact fare from public officials. These officials then devised a plan whereby they could be carried without cost to themselves and yet the ferrymen be satisfied. In 1703, in the act granting the Newport-Conanicut Ferry to John Carr, the latter was to carry certain specified officials "over said ferry, and charge it to account that it may be deducted out of what you are to pay yearly for the ferry".

Thus the burden was shifted from the ferryman to the colony. This plan did not long remain in vogue, for, in 1709, it was voted that all the Conanicut ferries should transport all the general officers, justices, deputies and the post free, when upon public concern. The petty graft thus provided by statute, in later years became a cheap method by which public carriers could influence legislatures, until, in quite recent years, the state was constrained to put an end to the issuance of passes. The ferrymen, although forbidden to charge for the transportation of officials, found that they could charge for the horses on which they rode. Consequently, when some of the members complained that, when going to or from the assembly, they had to pay ferriage, the general assembly, in 1727, voted that ferrymen must carry free "members of the General Assembly, General Court of Trials, or any Juryman going to or from said Court, or any Horse such Member or Person shall have with him for his ease and Transportation from his place of Abode to said Assembly or Court or from thence home."

Passes for Training Days

Owing to the incorporation of Barrington with Warren, 27 January, 1746-7, there was considerable dissatisfaction among the inhabitants that they had to pay ferriage when engaged in the town's affairs. Special provision was made in August, 1747, "that Kelly's and Miller's Ferries in Warren, shall be free on all publick Days in said Town, to wit, on the Days of Town meeting, sitting of the Town Council, and training Days" to such inhabitants as shall be concerned in any of the businesses aforesaid. In 1770 Warren was divided, so that there was no need of providing for free passage to town meetings, but evidently the two towns had training days in common, for officers and soldiers, with their horses and accoutrements, still retained the privilege of free ferriage. This did not satisfy the people, for, 10 March, 1757, those living on the east side of Warren River petitioned to have a company and training day of their own, so as not to have to cross the ferry on training days.

When the "Great Bridge" in Providence was carried away by the September Gale, 23 September, 1815, the town at once provided a ferry at public expense and on 25 September provided that the ferriage should be two cents "except, however, for such as are on business of necessity". It can be well imagined that such a rule would give rise to endless disputes and great dissatisfaction, hence it is not surprising that a week later it was "Resolved that in future no toll for passing the river on the scow imposed by this council be exacted of the passengers until nine o'clock in the evening".

Sharp Bargains in Passes

Some of the old ferry owners, when they came to a decision to part with their ferry property, with characteristic New England thrift, bargained for passes for themselves and families. Thus, when Josiah Arnold, in 1736, sold the two ferries on the West side of Jamestown to Benjamin Sheffield, the latter bound himself and his heirs and assigns to grant free ferriage to Josiah Arnold and to his son Josiah, and to the wife of Josiah Arnold, Sr. if he married. Free passage, however, was not to be given except when others were going over the ferry.

When, in 1752, David Green sold his ferry house and wharf on the east side of Jamestown, to William Martin, he drove a still closer bargain, for he made Martin give a bond in the sum of £1,000 that he and his heirs, would give free ferriage to David Green, his wife and family, themselves, and what they have occasion to transport over the ferry, and all the children and the respective husbands and wives of all the children that they now have, or may marry, and the riding horses of his children, during the natural lives of said children.

As we have seen, the earlier ferry acts prescribed the rates of ferriage and also the hours during which the ferryman must be in attendance. Night service was not required, but physicians, surgeons, midwives and those sent after them, must be carried at any time. Doubtless ferrymen did carry travelers at night for an extra fee, but a provision was introduced in the ferry act in 1752 requiring ferrymen to carry physicians, surgeons, midwives, and persons sent after them for common ferriage at any time of night, a practice which remained in vogue so long as sailing boats were in use.

Ferries in War Time

So early as King Philip's War, ferries played a part in military operations and served that valiant warrior, Captain Benjamin Church, though on one occasion the ferry-boat failed him. On 11 December, 1675, Church writes, "upon the General's request he went thence the nearest way over the Ferries, with Major Smith to his Garrison in the Narragansett country * * * and Major Church meeting with fair Winds arrived safe at the Major's Garrison in the evening." Church was in Rehoboth at the time that he received this order, and he went to Smith's Garrison in Wickford to join the forces of the colonies on their way to the Great Swamp Fight. The Colonial forces had marched down through Providence, but it does not seem probable that Church went that way, for it could have been of little moment, whether the winds were fair for crossing the Providence ferries. It is more likely that he went over Bristol Ferry and the Newport, Conanicut, and Narragansett ferries. There is no record that these latter ferries had been officially established at that time, though they might have been, but even if they had not, there were doubtless boatmen who would occasionally transport travelers.

In the following spring a cannon was placed on Ferry Neck in Portsmouth to guard the passage at Howland's Ferry, and another was placed near the house of John Borden to guard Bristol Ferry. Church, who just before the breaking out of the war, had built himself a house at Seaconnet, had occasion to cross the ferries several times, and he placed his wife for safety on Rhode Island. He was paying her a visit, when the news was brought to him, that King Philip was at Mount Hope. He at once hurried to Tripp's (Bristol) Ferry and went over with his men and killed Philip. Many of the warriors under Anawan escaped. Some days later, about the last of August, Church again wishing to cross Bristol Ferry, found "the ferry boat out of the way so he was obliged to use canoes", but a wind sprang up which made it too rough for the canoes, after Church, with fifteen or sixteen friendly Indians had gone over. Later, however, his white soldiers followed him.

During the French and Indian Wars, this Colony was not the seat of hostilities, though many troops were furnished. As has already been referred to, stringent regulations had to be made to prevent deserters escaping over the ferries.

THE REVOLUTION

During the Revolution similar surveillance was maintained to prevent communication with the British. An act passed in February, 1776, authorized the committees of inspection to inspect freight boats, when they may be in danger of being brought to by any of the ministerial ships of war and, if any person be found on board, who is suspected of being unfriendly to the common cause of America, such person may be prevented from passing in such boat.

During war the control of avenues of communication within and around the zone of hostilities is a matter of the greatest importance. The ferries of Rhode Island, at the breaking out of the Revolution, were insignificant, as compared with present means of transportation. Nevertheless, they were the chief avenues of travel and commerce, and their control was as important to the contending forces of those times, as it was that the Allies in the Great War should keep the English Channel open.

The first interference with the ferries is probably shown by the following item which appeared in the *Newport Mercury*, April 24, 1775:—"Last Wednesday morning the point ferry-boat had two shot fired at her from the tender of the ship Rose in this harbour, one of which went between the post-rider and the ferryman." By the middle of the summer of 1775 the British ships in the bay, under Commander Wallace, were beginning to harass the country, by seizing vessels and taking live stock off of the islands. In order to make it difficult for Wallace to get many supplies at a time, it was voted in August, 1775, that the ferry-boats to Newport should not carry more than two cattle, or five sheep, at a time. Stiles, writing 3 September, 1775, says that Wallace stops all ferry-boats and wood boats and he fears a famine. Affairs in Newport were in a critical condition, and it was deemed expedient to save the town by temporizing with the enemy, and it was voted that the town might negotiate with Wallace for supplying the ships with beef, beer and etc., provided he allowed the ferry-boats and wood boats with their passengers and supplies to pass unmolested. That the ferry-boats were sometimes molested is shown by the following item from the *Newport Mercury* of 16 October, 1775.

"Within 4 days past the men of war have taken out and carried away the masts, bowsprits etc. of a number of small sloops and ferry-boats." The Newport-Jamestown Ferries had perhaps been interrupted before. This action would certainly have most effectually closed them.

The people of North Kingstown were averse to an influx of Tories from Newport and on 7 October, 1775 the town's committee of inspection and correspondence passed the following

"Resolved therefore, That no boatman, ferryman, or other person whatever, shall bring any such persons their families or effects into this town, upon any pretence whatever * * * ."

The committee also took the following action in order to prevent trading with the enemy.

"Resolved, That no boatman, ferryman, or other persons, do take in any provisions or freight to carry to Newport, without the consent and approbation of one or more of this committee * * * ." In midsummer the general assembly voted to remove all the cattle and sheep from Block Island, so that they would not fall into the hands of the enemy, and afterwards they were removed from all the islands in the bay. This was a perilous undertaking and 250 minute men were enlisted for the purpose. Among these was Captain James Albro and a detachment of men enlisted by him. They were ferried across to Jamestown from South Kingstown by Mrs. Mary Franklin and also were billeted with her. Eighteen months later the colony paid her bill, which amounted to £3.15.4 for ferriage and £18.2.7 for billeting. Mrs. Franklin was still more unfortunate concerning her ferry-boat, which, together with the negro who managed it, were taken to remove stock from the island. The negro was boarded with William Slocum who sued Mrs. Franklin and obtained $40 in silver. As late as October 1783 Mrs. Franklin had not been paid and petitioned the General Assembly for recompense. In December two of her houses were burned by the British.

Naturally people were constantly leaving Newport, seeking a place of safety, and complaint was made to the general assembly "that divers people taking an undue advantage of the consternation and distresses of the town of Newport, have exacted most exhorbitant prices for the removal and wharfage of the goods of the inhabitants of the town." A committee was appointed to fix the price of cartage, wharfage, and transportation over the ferries. Anyone who charged more was to be fined £3. Dr. Stiles remained in Newport until 13 March, 1776, when he took his family of seven persons, with three loads of goods, to Fogland Ferry, where they embarked for Assonet. The inhabitants on the mainland also made use of the ferries to escape from the British, for Miss Alice Wheaton, who recently died in Warren, recalled how her grandmother, daughter of General Miller, told her that when a little girl, she with other children and women, were ferried across to Barrington to a place of safety, when the British ravaged the town 25 May, 1778.

BURNING OF THE FERRIES

The depredations of Wallace became worse, and, on 10 December, 1775, a force of men from his ships went ashore on Conanicut and burnt all the dwellings, fifteen in number, between the two ferries. Stiles gives a list of the owners of the properties, among whom were the ferry owners, Benjamin Ellery and the Widow Franklin. Doubtless, all the ferry property was destroyed, and it seems unlikely that these ferries were again operated, except temporarily, until after the departure of the British.

The North Ferry, from Conanicut to North Kingstown, apparently remained in operation for some time, perhaps during the whole period of the war, for Anderson's Almanacs for 1775, and 1776, give the route to Greenwich and Providence across this ferry and mention Northup's house of entertainment. Northup was at this time keeper of the ferry on the Kingstown side. On 18 December, 1776, the enemy drove the ferry-boat ashore near the North Ferry, but were repulsed by two companies of the colonial forces. The general assembly voted that the effects, salvaged from the boat, be sold at auction and half the amount be paid to the owners of the boat and that half be distributed to the persons who recaptured it.

When the British temporarily left the bay in April, 1776, the ferry from The Point in Newport to Jamestown was probably re-established for a while, for the troops were ordered out of the ferry house on The Point belonging to Mr. Benjamin Ellery, in order that the ferry might be kept open as usual.

Bristol Ferry was, of course, out of commission during the time that the British occupied the north end of the island. It was probably re-established shortly after their departure in October, 1779. At any rate, it was in operation the next summer, for one of the French officers, was charged an exhorbitant price for ferriage. Fogland Ferry, too, could not be operated during the war and it is uncertain whether it was ever re-established. Howland's Ferry was protected throughout the war by the Americans. On a French manuscript map of 1778 this is designated "Passage des Americains". The other ferries in the Colony were not molested by the enemy.

TRANSPORTATION OF MILITARY FORCES

Doubtless the ferrymen did a big business and reaped a harvest from the transportation of troops and military supplies, though perhaps sometimes, like poor Mary Franklin, they may have had to wait a long time for their pay. Although in colonial times, some of the ferries were required to transport the militia free on training days, they could not be expected to transport soldiers free in time of war. It was not until 1781 that we have found any legislation on the subject. In May of that year it was voted that the ferriages of militia now ordered on duty, and also their return, be defrayed by the public and that the commanding officer give the ferryman a certificate which would be honored by the general assembly.

Of course, it was utterly impossible for the ferrymen to handle the immense traffic necessitated by the war, and the military authorities were obliged to furnish in great measure their own transportation. Large numbers of flat boats, or scows, were provided for the transportation of troops. In September, 1776, two flat bottomed boats were ordered, large enough to transport about seventy men each. That these provisions were not adequate, is shown by the following memorandum of Count DeCorny, commissary of war of the French army.

"Lewis Ethis DeCorny Esq—Commissary of War—french army—Memorandum of the Repairs necessary for the three Ferry's to be crossed bet. Prov-& Newport—

Providence Ferry

Two Scows of a larger size than those now at this Place are at least necessary, to which Flaps must be placed at each End to render the Entrance and the landing of carriages easy, and to prevent them from being damaged.

Warren Ferry—

Requires also Two scows of a larger size than what are at present made use of, to be fix'd here; They must also have Flaps at each End, The Wharfs on each side this Ferry require some trifling Repairs to facilitate the Passage—

Bristol Ferry—

It is impossible to suppose that a French army has been seriously expected in this Country when a view is taken of the dreadful condition of the wharfs on each side of the River, as it is impossible to believe that with such Expectation, Repairs of such Importance and so absolutely necessary to the service of the Army could at this Time remain neglected—The Direction of the two wharfs of this Ferry must be rectified and improved.

Their size must be increased. The Large stones on the surface, must first be covered with a Bed of small stones and large Gravel, to fill up the Intervals, and be well beat with Drivers—The second Bed must be of Gravel of a less size which is to be covered afterwards with fine Gravel or sand bound close by Rollers to prevent the Tide from washing it away. The stones both large and small are to be found on the spot, it is necessary only to spread them. Several Batteaus and Scows are necessary at this place, the arm of the sea being wide, the means of crossing it must be increased, that the service may be executed with the greatest Dispatch possible.

It is necessary to establish at these three Ferrys a sufficient number Boatmen for the service, they shall be paid monthly and shall carry over without any Charge, all that shall belong to His most Christian Majesty's Fleet and Army, and every Person and thing depending on the same, and if this Expense shall be judged to belong to the aforesaid Service it shall be repayed by His most Christian Majesty.

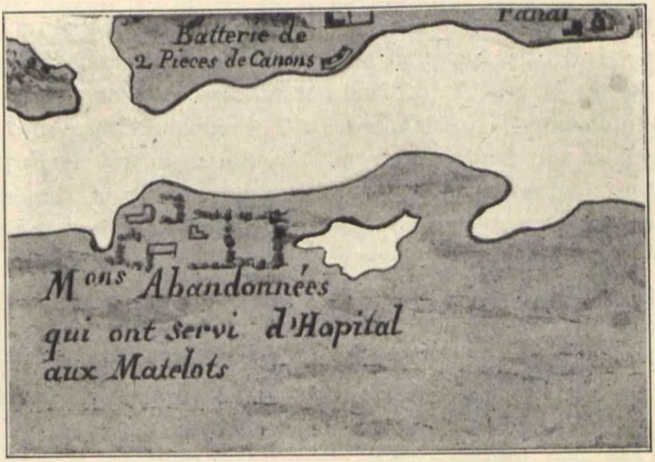
Newport July 6th 1780
DeCorny

N. B.—To guard against the Inconvenience of the Delay in repairing the Ferry at Bristol, M. DeCorny has requested Mons. DeLaTouche, to ascend with his Frigate, and to employ his Crew to repair the Wharfs; Tools and wheelbarrows must be sent from Providence and wood necessary for the Work must be furnished and sent to the Ferry. Resolved that a committee wait on De. Lewis Ethis DeCorny on the subject, the assembly disposed to take every precaution for the accommodation of our allys—"

As a result of DeCorny's memorial, Ephraim Bowen, Jr., deputy quartermaster general, reported that the money granted him for the repair of boats and hospitals had been entirely expended and the assembly voted that Bowen be authorized to draw the sum of £10,000, lawful money, out of the general treasury, for the purposes aforesaid, and for making necessary repairs at Providence and Bristol Ferries.

Fortification of Ferries

In the early part of 1776 fortifications were erected on both sides of Bristol Ferry in order to keep communication open across the ferry. A fort and barracks were erected in Tiverton to command Howland's Ferry. Companies were also stationed at the South Ferry and on the mainland at Fogland Ferry. Quite a military establishment grew up at Howland's Ferry, which was held by the Americans throughout the war. The Americans were, however, driven off of the island of Rhode Island and the battery which the Americans had erected directed its fire against the Bristol side of the ferry. It is said that the Pearce family, who occupied the ferry house, sought safety in Bristol, and that a cannon ball from the British passed between the legs of the horse which was carrying Mrs. Pearce and her son. Besides being driven from the ferry house William Pearce lost six barrels of cider and thirty bushels of potatos which were taken by the American troops who came over from Rhode Island. He was, however, paid by the general assembly for these, as well as for boarding and nursing a soldier, and for billeting and ferrying a number of soldiers who went upon Rhode Island with General Lee. A company was stationed in South Kingstown to guard the South Ferry and one in Tiverton to guard Fogland Ferry. When the British controlled The Island, they erected a battery to guard Fogland Ferry, and also had a frigate, the *Cerberus*, stationed in the ferry way. Captain Edward Gray was the keeper of Fogland Ferry on the Tiverton side, and it is said that his wife Sarah kept the house of entertainment during his absence, while the ferry was interrupted, and that occasionally British soldiers made raids over to the mainland and insisted on being served with drinks by Mrs. Gray. It is related that she was a woman of uncommon nerve and never daunted by the threats of the enemy. A Hessian soldier, on one occasion, inquired for West India rum. He was told that they had none, but they could furnish him with some East India. He replied that he would have a glass. This was supposed to be bold repartee, but its witticism is lost upon this day and generation.



This illustration shows the abandoned houses at the South Ferry used as a hospital by the French naval forces in 1778. A small portion of a map in the George L. Shepley Library.

Although the French fleet was in the bay only a short time in 1778, they deemed it best to establish hospitals on shore. The ferry landings were convenient for this purpose and a hospital was established at Bristol Ferry. As is indicated by a French manuscript map of 1778, another hospital was located at the ferry at South Kingstown, the abandoned houses being used for the purpose.

Re-opening of the Ferries

After the British left Newport permanently in October, 1779, the work of reconstruction became most urgent. Newport had obtained much of its provisions and fuel from the Narragansett country, or from Conanicut. It was brought over on the ferry-boats, or on small sloops. Newport was left in a most deplorable condition. The emergency was so great that the re-establishment of the ferries could not be left to private capital and initiative. The wharves of the South Ferry, both in South Kingstown and in Jamestown, were entirely destroyed. Enoch Hazard was directed to repair these wharves in the most frugal manner possible, provided he could not get the owners to do it. He was also to hire two boats with persons to operate them. Rates of ferriage were established and the receipts were to be turned in to the general treasury to pay the expense of building the wharves. The owners of the ferries could have them returned on paying the cost of repairs. Hazard drew £600 for making the repairs. These, however, did not seem to be entirely satisfactory, as the next autumn the deputy quartermaster general was requested to furnish to Mrs. Mary Franklin, the owner of the Conanicut wharf, a boat suitable for carrying stones to be used in repairing her wharf. Previous to that, in July, 1780, it was deemed best to furnish Mrs. Franklin with a boat, so that she might re-establish her ferry and a committee was appointed for this purpose. In September, George Irish was empowered to draw the sum of $400 in gold, or silver, out of the general treasury to purchase the boat. In March, 1781, Irish, reported to the general assembly that he had bought a ferry-boat, delivered it to Mrs. Franklin, and had taken her notes for it, and had deposited the notes with the treasurer general for which service he received £9.7.2 paper money.

PART II

A History of Each Ferry

PAWTUCKET FERRY

The first reference to this ferry, which was at what is now Lonsdale and not at Pawtucket Falls, is in a letter of Roger Williams to John Winthrop, dated 27 June, 1675. He writes "some say John Scot at Pawtucket Ferry is slain." Later proceedings in this case show that he was shot by an Indian and tradition is that he was standing in the doorway of his own house. Although this is the first reference to the ferry, it is quite likely that one had been in existence long before. On 10 December, 1650, the town of Rehoboth voted to lay out a highway for the towns use, or any that shall have occasion to pass from the town to Providence, or Mr. Blackstone's. As we shall see, the ferry was near Blackstone's house. On 27 July, 1671, the town of Providence, on petition of John Scott, ordered the lay out of a highway "to the aforesayd Blaxtons River, for strangers & others to pass the sayd River where it may be most Convenient to pass over the sayd River." The location of William Blackstone's house was, as is well known, in what is now the yard of the Hope and Ann mill at Lonsdale, and its site is marked by a monument. John Scott's land was directly opposite, where sixty acres were laid out to him in the right of Richard Scott, his father, on the south side of Pawtucket River against the former dwelling of William Blackstone. The bounds of this land were lost and 2 January, 1677, it was again bounded. A few years later the location of the passage over the river was changed, for the town of Providence 21 August, 1684, sent a communication to the town of Rehoboth stating that a highway had been laid out over Pawtucket River at the end of the hill on the western part of John Scott's planting field, a little up stream from the place where Mr. Blackstone's house formerly stood at the ancient roadway which leads to the Western Plain. The same year the proprietors of Rehoboth laid out a highway from Pawtucket River through John Blackstone's land up the hill to meet the road to Mendon. John Blackstone was the son of William and inherited part of his father's estate. From the layout of these roads it would appear that the new passage over the river was about where Whipple Bridge now stands.

Henry Stacy of Rehoboth was, for a time, mail carrier and, as we have seen, had trouble with the ferryman at the Narrow Passage in 1696. Shortly after this he purchased land of James Stevenson which adjoined the Blackstone land and 10 October, 1699, he petitioned the court of general sessions for a new layout of the road leading to "a certain ferrey over Blackstone's River". The following January a committee, which had been appointed for this purpose, made a report on a layout to the Pawtucket River over against the house of Sylvanus Scott as the best place for a passage over "that troublesome River". On 9 July, 1700, this road was laid out and it was provided that "a sufficiency of room be left of sd land for the Conveniency of the Ferry by the River-side". Sylvanus Scott was the son of John Scott, and inherited his farm on the Providence side of the river. David Whipple purchased the Blackstone property and other land in Rehoboth, and on his death it went to his son, Jeremiah. Jeremiah Whipple, 10 October, 1710, was granted by the court of general sessions the privilege of keeping the ferry over the Blackstone River at the road which crosses to Providence, provided he hath a good and sufficient boat for men and horses. The license was for seven years and the rate of ferriage was fixed at fourpence for man and horse and twopence for a single person.

WEYBOSSET FERRY

A ferry must have been needed in very early times at the place where the "Great Bridge" in Providence is now located, but we have found very little contemporaneous information concerning it.

It is commonly stated that in the earliest times, before there was a ferry, there was a fording place from the present Exchange Street to Steeple Street. It is quite possible that the water would be shoal enough at low tide where the river widened out into the Cove. Judge Staples, who was very careful in his statements, refers to this ford. The use of this fording place is perhaps referred to in the layout of Steeple Street in 1738. The street was to be laid out into the river opposite the homestead of John Angell "where they usually landed when they Rode or Carted from the other side of the River".

A petition of the town of Providence to the general assembly May, 1660, states that the town had spent £160 for building a bridge, useful, not only to the town, but to the whole country. This was Weybosset Bridge and for the town to spend such a sum of money on such a difficult engineering project indicates that the need for it must have been great, and we can scarcely believe that, before the construction of the bridge, the need was not met by a ferry. John Howland, whose memory reached back to the middle of the eighteenth century, said "From the time that settlements were made in Johnston and Cranston, tradition reports that a ferry was kept up from a wharf on the east shore to Weybosset Point on the west." The first Weybosset Bridge was probably in use until sometime between 1671 and 1675. It was not rebuilt before 1711. During this time it is probable that a ferry was maintained. On 20 February, 1689, Valentine Whitman deeded land described as two miles south from a hill called Wayboysset Hill, being at the ferry in said Providence. On 22 July, 1704, the town meeting of Providence requested the proprietors not to make any more grants of land along the waterside from what is now Crawford St. to Steeple St. "because there is so Constant a Passing to & from the Towne side to Wayboysett side Cross the Water & from Wayboysett side to the Towne with Cannooes & Boates, Rideing & Carting & Swimming over of Cattell from side to side". The proprietors voted to do this and they also voted that the little neck of land called Wayboysett Neck remain forever in common "that there may be a free Recourse also on Wayboyset side to the Salt Water for passage or what improve/mt/ Else may be made of the Sea by people; or for

Cattell coming to the Salt Wate [ ] Travelling on foote or on horse back, carting, Ferrieing, &c."

At the same meeting Gideon Crawford and Joseph Whipple were appointed a committee to raise funds to build a bridge from the west end of Daniel Abbott's lot to Weybosset Hill. They do not seem to have been very successful and in May, 1711, the colony appropriated money to aid in the construction of this and other bridges, and it is likely that the bridge was built about this time. In 1718 the bridge was destroyed by a flood. In January, 1728 it again broke down and was repaired at a cost of over £65. In 1736 the bridge had suffered great decay and the town spent £125 in repairs and the general assembly appropriated £80 more. It would thus appear that the bridge was frequently impassible, even when not entirely destroyed. The committee which had charge of the bridge, reported, January, 1741-2, that when the bridge is down, certain persons obtain considerable money by ferrying people across. The committee suggested that it, or some suitable person, should be given an exclusive franchise for the ferry and that the profits be devoted to the maintenance of the bridge. Apparently the bridge was soon destroyed again, for, in 1744, a lottery was authorized for building a bridge over Weybosset River in Providence. The project languished and 24 June, 1746, the general assembly took up with the suggestion of the committee, above referred to, and provided for the establishment of a ferry. Amaziah Waterman of Providence was to keep the ferry on the east side and Henry Sweeting of Providence was to keep it on the west side and so to continue until a bridge should be built over the river, and no other person should presume to ferry over said river for hire. The rates of ferriage were fixed. Staples says that Job Sweeting received the ferry license, but the manuscript copy of the acts and resolves, for the fourth Tuesday in June, 1746, has it Henry. Henry Sweeting, besides engaging in other lines of business, was an inn-keeper and at the time this ferry was set up, lived on the lot on Westminster St. next west of the present Dyer's gangway where the Jones Building now is. The lot extended back to the river. This property comprised lots

53 and 54 in a plat of house laid out in 1717, and was purchased by Henry Sweeting in 1726 and 1727 and sold by him to his son Job in 1756. Job Sweeting, son of Henry, was born 28 August, 1727, so that as a young man he might well have operated the ferry for his father. We have not succeeded in locating the ferry landing place, or the house of the ferry keeper, on the east side of the river. The bridge apparently was not rebuilt until the latter part of 1749 and probably the ferry was maintained during this period. On 24 October, 1761, the bridge was again carried away by the highest tide ever known up to that time. September 28, 1815, was the day of the "Great Gale", which, of course, destroyed the bridge. The town was now of such a size that this interruption of traffic was a very serious matter. The next day the town council ordered that, until a bridge be built, a scow be provided to convey persons across the river and that Solomon Arnold be engaged to superintend it. He was authorized to cause a hawser to be stretched taut across the river for conveniency in handling the scow back and forth. The ferry was thus to be a rope ferry. Arnold was to receive two dollars a day for superintendence and was to employ two men at a dollar and a quarter a day. It was intended to transport foot passengers only and such goods as they could carry in their hands. The rate of fare was fixed at two cents for each person "except however, such as are on business of necessity". It can be imagined that the interpretation of the exception would give rise to endless trouble and it is not surprising that a few days later, on October 2, it was "Resolved that in future no toll for passing the river on the scow employed by this council be exacted of the passengers until 9 o'clock in the evening". Provision for rebuilding the bridge was not made until 17 April, 1816, when a committee was appointed for that purpose. The next reference to the bridge which was found in the records is 28 October, 1817, when the rail of the bridge was to be painted.

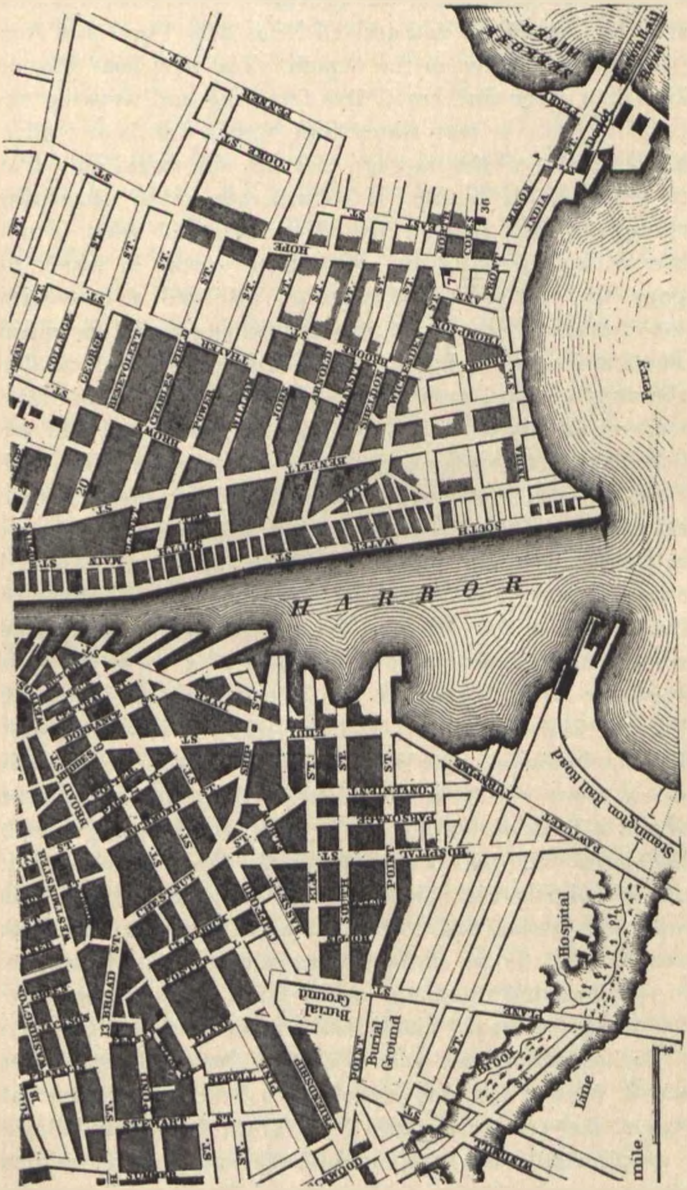
The Railroad Ferry at Providence

When the New York, Providence and Boston Railroad Company was chartered in 1832, it was intended to provide for through travel between the terminal cities, but the original Rhode Island charter only provided for a railroad from Providence to the Connecticut line at Westerly. When the Boston and Providence Railroad and Transportation Company was chartered by the Rhode Island general assembly in May, 1834, it had been determined that the two roads should be connected by a ferry and section fourteen of this charter provided that such a ferry across Providence River should be established and maintained at mutual expense whenever, after completion of both roads, either board of directors should ask for it. In October, 1842, this charter was amended so as to permit the Boston road to operate the ferry if the other road would give consent, but this it never did.

Exactly when the ferry was established we do not know, but probably very soon after the railroad from Providence to Stonington was opened. The first train to Stonington and boat to New York were run 10 November 1837. The company invited a large number of guests and treated them royally. Among them were representatives from most of the newspapers of the northeastern part of the country and in their papers may be found accounts of the proceedings. In only one of these have we found reference to a ferry at Providence. The editor of the "Bunker Hill Aurora", of Charlestown, Mass., in his issue of 18 November, 1837, writes that he went by train to Providence where the guests took carriages to the Stonington depot on the other side of the river and then notes, in brackets, that "a ferry-boat has been provided to take across passengers and baggage without delay". Apparently the ferry-boat was not in readiness for the opening day. According to Morrison, communication between the two railroads was by means of a ferry-boat built in 1834 and named the *Stonington*, owned by Jesse L. Moss. This boat was built in New York in 1834 by J. Williams and had a forty horse power, low pressure engine, of the working beam type, built by James P. Allaire. She was 115 ft. 9 in. long, 23 ft. 2 in. wide, 8 ft. 6 in., deep from spar deck to keel, and registered 211 11/95 tons. Phineas S. Mills was the captain and Seth Darling, the engineer. Darling was originally of Brooklyn, but later lived in Providence. He long treasured a copper camphene lamp which was used on the *Stonington* and is now preserved in the Rhode Island Historical Society. Jesse L. Moss was a prominent citizen of Westerly and an incorporator of the New York, Providence and Boston Railroad Company. The *Stonington* was in Providence and probably on her route by December 21, for it is noted in the marine intelligence of the "*Providence Daily Journal*", of the following day, that she towed a disabled vessel to the city on the twenty-first. Again we hear of the steam ferry-boat, *Stonington,* on 28 November, 1838, when the captain, Phineas Mills, got into trouble with the mate of the steamer *John W. Richmond* while the two boats were lying at the wharf. From the report of the New York, Providence and Boston Railroad Company it is learned that, on the completion of its road, it asked the Boston company to establish the ferry agreeable to that company's charter, but, owing to the latter's delay, it became necessary for the Stonington company, in order that it might have the immediate use of its road, to establish the ferry, leaving the question of expense open for negotiation with the Boston road. The steamer *Stonington* was procured and placed on the station. Negotiations between the two companies dragged on and it was not until the annual meeting in September, 1840, that it was reported that an agreement between the two companies had been reached. The Stonington road was to operate the ferry and the Boston road was to pay $5,000 per annum for its support and to furnish a wharf on the east side of the river for the accommodation of the ferry-boat. The gross cost, exclusive of depreciation, of operating the ferry for the year ending 31 August, 1840, was $9,012.75. The ferry continued to be operated by the New York, Providence and Boston Railroad Company until that road entered the Union Station at Providence, thus making a direct rail connection with the Boston road, when the ferry was no longer needed, and was abandoned. The first train over the new road came into the station on 3 May, 1848.

The first ferry-boat became inadequate and a larger boat, also named the *Stonington,* was procured. She, also, was commanded by Capt. Mills and arrived from New York on 6 August, 1839, to ply between the depots. The new boat was described as a large fine craft, 160 feet long and drawing two feet ten inches. It was stated that with a full boat load of passengers, with all the baggage cars etc., she would only draw three feet. These figures, if correct, are surely surprising. The baggage cars above referred to were not what is now known as baggage cars, but were hand trucks in which the baggage was carried. These trucks afforded a convenient means of transferring the trunks and other parcels on and off the boats and onto the flat cars. In fact, they have been used on the Stonington Road until quite recent times. Governor Bourn remembers the use of these trucks on the *Stonington* and says that the passengers walked on to the boat from the train. Probably the *Stonington* was not a double ended ferryboat, as there would have been no need for that type, since vehicles were not to be carried, but was just an ordinary steamboat. There is no sign of a ferry slip in the lithograph referred to below.

The location of the railroads, the stations and the ferry landings are clearly shown in Moore's Map of Providence, 1844, surveyed by N. B. Schubarth. A part of this map is here reproduced. The Stonington Railroad wharf was about where Hill's wharf now is. The Boston Railroad wharf was at India Point in front of Tockwotten Park. Both the stations are shown in a large lithograph of Providence Harbor published in 1849 after they had been abandoned. There is also at the Rhode Island Historical Society an oil painting of India Point showing the station and, also, on the hill above it, the Tockwotten House. These stations were miniature Doric temples, built of wood, and the one at India Point was long preserved by the railroad company and is well remembered by the writers. The Tockwotten House was originally the dwelling of Gen. James B. Mason and was made into a hotel to accommodate the travel between Boston and New York, for it was believed that people would not care to make the long journey without stopping to rest. Henry R. Palmer, of Stonington, says that


SEEKONK RIVER
Boston Rail Road
HARBOR
Ferry
Stonington Rail Road
Hospital
Burial Ground
Brook
Line
mile.
HOPE ST.
BENEFIT ST.
SOUTH WATER ST.
MAIN ST.
INDIA
BROAD ST.
WESTMINSTER ST.
WASHINGTON
CHESNUT
POINT
EDDY ST.
WICKENDEN
THAYER ST.
GEORGE
COLLEGE
WATER ST.

Portion of N. B. Schubarth's map of Providence, 1844, showing location of the railroad ferry.

a hotel was built in that town for the same reason. Mr. Palmer's mother remembers crossing the Providence Ferry when a little girl and sitting on the green wooden benches provided for the passengers on the boat.

JAMES STREET TO SHIP STREET

PROVIDENCE

This was commonly called the James Street Ferry. It was also called the Upper Ferry to distinguish it from the Lower Ferry later established at India Street. The terms upper and lower ferry had formerly been applied to the two ferries across the Seekonk, but these had been abandoned long before Providence River ferries had been licensed. The first reference we have to this ferry is an act of the general assembly in 1843 authorizing the mayor and aldermen of Providence to establish ferries between Weybosset Bridge and a line extending westerly from the northerly side of India Street. The rate of ferriage in the daytime was fixed at two cents. In 1848 the above authority was extended to all parts of Providence Harbor. It seems altogether probable that there were ferries across the river long before this, but, from the above act, it may be assumed that they were unlicensed, private undertakings, and therefore do not appear in the public records.

In pursuance of this act, the board of aldermen, 6 March, 1843, "Ordered that the ferry from the public landing at the foot of James Street to the public landing at the foot of Ship Street shall be and the same is hereby established as a ferry". This phraseology also indicates that there had previously been an unlicensed ferry at this location. The annual rental of the ferry was fixed at $50 per year and a bond, in the sum of $100, was required of the lessee. Various rules were adopted in regard to the number of boats, the number of passengers, the hours and failure to give attendance. The lease was granted to George Earl, who continued to hold it until 1864, though his rental was increased to $90 in 1853, at which time he was also required to keep the landing in order as directed by the board of aldermen. About this time complaint was made of the imperfect lighting of the ferry landings at night and, 2 March, 1863, it was ordered that gas lights be placed at both landings. In 1859, on complaint of George Earl, the lessee, the city, June 9, appropriated $100 to dredge the dock. In 1864 bids were asked for the lease for a period of five years. Four bids were received and the city treasurer was authorized to lease the ferry for $100 annually to Albert H. Ormsbee. Ormsbee was a dealer in ship stores on South Water Street. The next lease, a record of which was found, was to Joseph Olney, 2 December, 1872, at the same rental. Olney was a coal dealer next to the ferry. Charles P. Olney, the son of Joseph Olney, says that one reason why his father leased the ferry was because he desired to have the schooners which came up to his coal wharf project out across the ferry slip to which, of course, the ferrymen objected. On 31 August, 1876, there was a petition from James C. Sayers for a reduction of the rental of the ferry. Sayers was also a dealer in ship stores on South Water Street and was probably lessee of the ferry. The rent of the ferry was reduced to $50 after 1 October, 1876, but 2 August, 1877, Jesse Burrows asked for another reduction, which however, he did not get. Burrows, who according to the directories, had been a ferryman on the James Street ferry since 1867, had presumably become the lessee. Charles P. Olney says that Burrows often slept in the ferry house so as to be on hand to get the early passengers in the morning. It is said that through his thrift and industry he laid by quite a tidy sum. In 1879 the ferry was leased to him. In 1880 it was leased to Moses Smith and in 1883 to Joseph R. True and his rental was then fixed at $12 a year. True received another lease, 4 June, 1883, and this is the last on record. In fact, there is no further reference to the ferry until 25 October, 1886, when the superintendent of lights was directed to discontinue the lamp at the James Street ferry house.

Undoubtedly the lessees of this ferry did not themselves row the boats, for they were all men actively engaged in other business, with the exception of Jesse Burrows, who for a few years was both proprietor and boatman. There must have been many boatmen, but the only ones we know of were William Doty who tended the ferry from 1862-1873 and Benjamin E. Young from 1867-1871. Theodore Gauch, who has had a blacksmith shop at the corner of James and South Water Street, says that the last ferryman was Frank Silva, now living at Rehoboth.

During our childhood this was a very prosperous ferry. At the rush hours, four boats were often in use and the boats were crowded and passengers would be left standing on the steps. The business received its chief blow when the Point Street Bridge was opened for travel 22 October, 1872, and this was probably the cause of the reduction in the rent. The opening of the Crawford Street Bridge in 1874 still further diminished the traffic.

INDIA STREET TO HILL'S WHARF

PROVIDENCE

This was also known as the Lower Ferry, the South Ferry and Fox Point Ferry.

On 18 October, 1847, Nathaniel Bishop and others petitioned the board of aldermen for a ferry from Fox Point to the depot of the Stonington Railroad. The Mayor was directed to apply for an enabling act and such an act was obtained the following year. The first record of the granting of a lease was 10 February, 1851, when it was granted to James Wilbor for one year for $1.00. It was evidently considered a very much less valuable privilege than that at James Street for which $50.00 was charged. Apparently Wilbor did not care for the business for, on March 10, the ferry was leased to Joseph Chambers and on June 9, to William Smith. William Smith held the lease for about ten years, his last franchise being dated 5 May, 1862, and it was to run for one year and he was to pay $1.00 in advance. In 1854 he was called to task for not paying his rent, but business must have picked up, for, in 1858 the rental was raised to $3.00 a year and in 1859 to $5.00. No further record of this ferry was found until 22 July, 1875, at which time the Point Street bridge was being repaired, when Thomas Reynolds petitioned for the establishment of a ferry, but no record was found that it was granted. Nevertheless we distinctly remember this ferry in operation in the early seventies. According to the directories Henry Stevens, or Stephens, was ferryman in 1872 and 1873. He lived in a house-boat at Hill's Wharf. His son Richard according to the directory, was ferryman in 1873 and 1874. Old sea-dogs, familiar with the wharves of those days, recall that the old man had three sons, Thomas, Richard and Henry, who helped him with the ferry, and of course were called Tom, Dick and Harry.

Point Street Ferry

Providence

The Point Street Bridge was open for traffic in 1872, but it was not many years before it had to be closed for repairs and at such times there was apparently a demand for a ferry, for 3 June, 1875, Joseph Lewis was given the privilege of a ferry while repairs were going on and 16 August, 1877, John E. Chadwick had a similar privilege. In 1907, while the bridge was being widened, it was closed to foot travel from April 5 to May 11. During this period the Goff Brothers who, in the summer, operated the ferry between Pawtuxet and Crescent Park, put their two boats, the *Alberta* and the *Iola,* onto a service between the wharf adjoining the bridge on the east side of the river and Manchester and Hudson's wharf on the west side. Cyrillus M. Goff said that on some days as many as 2,000 passengers were carried. The fare was five cents for the round trip.

In 1883 John H. Edwards petitioned to be permitted to use the slip at the foot of South Main Street for ferry purposes, but he had leave to withdraw. It is difficult to understand why he desired this privilege unless he wished to operate a ferry to Hill's Wharf, though this location would not seem to be so convenient as India Street.

Other Ferry Projects

At the May session of the general assembly, 1827, a petition was presented by Richmond Bullock and others asking for a charter for a ferry in the town of Providence. There was also another petition from Carlo Mauran and Samuel Jackson asking for the same privilege. Neither of these petitions has been found and neither was acted upon.

In May 1857 the general assembly chartered the Providence Steam Ferry Boat Company which was permitted "to run said steamboat, or boats, from any place or places in this State, to any other place in this State or in the United States". Although the charter is thus seen to have been a liberal one, it appears that the intention was to establish a ferry, for the rates were fixed as for ferry traffic, two cents for a foot passenger, ten cents for a two horse team, etc. No mention was made of any place where the ferry was to be and no record has been found that a ferry was established under this charter.

Reference is here made to these proceedings merely to show that, even in the nineteenth century, our most substantial business men considered ferry business a promising venture.

Rehoboth to Providence

Kettle Point to Field's Point

The first reference to this ferry is in a court record 7 July, 1706, when Thomas Fuller of Rehoboth was allowed three months space longer to provide himself to keep a ferry at Hog Pen Point. The ferry was soon established and the next year Fuller applied to the court for assistance in securing a highway to the shore on the Providence side, without which it was alleged that the ferry was in a great measure useless.

On 14 July, 1707, the court of general sessions of Bristol

County voted that, whereas Thomas Fuller of Rehoboth had been granted the privilege of keeping a ferry, over from Rehoboth side to a point on Pawtucket side called Kettle Point, and whereas no way had been laid out on Pawtucket side through the land lying against the ferry belonging to Mr. Thomas Field, therefore application be made to the Governor and Government of Rhode Island that there might be a way laid out convenient for travelers to pass to and from the ferry without obstruction. A curious transference took place in the names of these points. What was then called Hog Pen Point is now known as Kettle Point and the Point on the opposite side, which was, in the old records called Kettle Point, has, for a long period of years, been known as Field's Point. The court record above quoted twice refers to the "Pawtucket side". Of course this is an error, Pawtuxet being intended. This error on the part of the Massachusetts officials can be excused since it is an error often made by people nowadays who are not familiar with Rhode Island.

The Thomas Field referred to owned that large tract of land extending west to what is now Eddy Street, south to New York Avenue and bounded north on Sassafras Cove and east on the bay. At least as early as 1682 a cart path run along the southern boundary to the water, but notwithstanding the efforts of the Bristol County authorities has not been, even up to the present time, made a public highway at its shore end.

Fuller soon got into trouble because of his too diligent attention to his duties as ferryman. It is noted in the court records, 12 July, 1709, that "Thomas Fuller of Rehoboth coming before this Court * * * to answer for not Attending the Public Worship of God on the Lord's day made his plea to wit, that he had a desire to attend the Public worship: But being engaged to attend the Ferry at Hog pen point, had for several sabboths been hindered by Reason of persons going over the Ferry, either for or with a doctor for the Releife of the sick but should endeavor for the future to repair to the public worship as often as he could upon which was dismissed paying necessary charges".

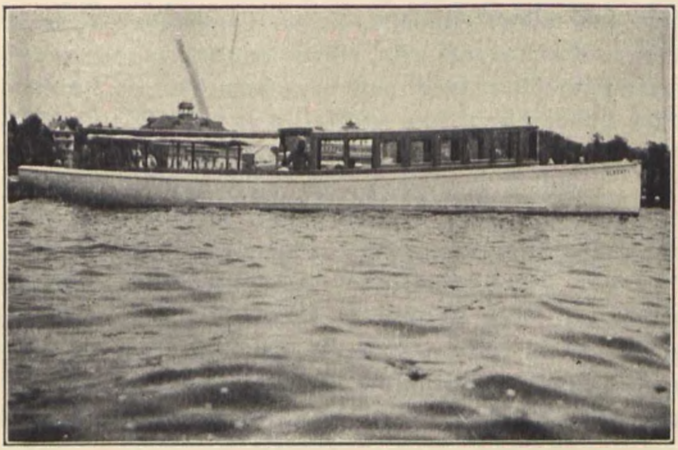
Hog Pen Point was in early times owned in common by several proprietors, among whom were the Browns, the Fullers and the Sabins. When Thomas Fuller was operating the ferry he probably deemed it advisable to purchase rights from the others. At any rate, 13 June, 1711, Benjamin Fuller and Israel Sabin, in order that there might be a good ferry kept, deeded to Thomas Fuller one undivided right in Hog Pen Point bounded east on the land of Nathaniel Brown, north on the highway and on the sea and south and west on the sea. A dozen or so others signed the deed. This is the last reference we have found to the ferry. How long it was maintained we do not know, but there must have been less use for it after Josiah Fuller's ferry was established at India Point in 1739.

Pawtuxet and Crescent Park

In 1900 a ferry was established between Pawtuxet and Crescent Park. It was operated by the Goff Brothers of Riverside, Frederick K., and Cyrillus M. In 1918 Cyrillus M. bought out his brother and since then has been the sole owner. The landing place has always been at the steamboat wharf at Crescent Park. For the first six years the landing place at Pawtuxet was at Harris' Wharf just below the bridge. Since then it has been at the foot of Aborn Street. It was the purpose of the ferry to carry people from Pawtuxet and the Edgewood section of Cranston across the bay, so that they might partake of the amusements of Crescent Park. Hence the ferry has been operated only during the summer season, from about a week before Memorial Day until a week or two after Labor Day. Lately the boat has run once an hour during the afternoon, except on Sundays, when the trips have been made every half hour. The rate of fare was ten cents up to four years ago, when it was raised to fifteen cents. The first boat was the *May*. She would only carry twenty-six people. The next boat was the *Iola*, which is still in use and is capable of carrying eighty persons. At one time the Goff Brothers also owned the *Alberta*. For a good deal of the time the Goffs navigated the boats themselves, though at times they employed others. Thus, during the early period of this ferry, Eleazer Ralph was captain. In recent years Melville Woodward has so served.

PAWTUXET AND VANITY FAIR

For a period of one season, when Vanity Fair, a summer amusement place, was doing its most prosperous business, the Goff Brothers ran the *Alberta* to this resort from Pawtuxet.



Launch *Alberta* used on the Pawtuxet-Crescent Park Ferry.

KIRWIN'S BEACH AND VANITY FAIR

During the season when the Goff Brothers ran the *Alberta* from Pawtuxet to Vanity Fair, they also ran the *Iola* from Kirwin's Beach to Vanity Fair, the better to accommodate people living in the Washington Park section of Providence and Edgewood.

PROVIDENCE TO REHOBOTH
AT NARROW PASSAGE

This ferry was known as the Upper Ferry, to distinguish it from the Lower Ferry at India Point. It was also called

Mason's Ferry, Barstow's Ferry, Edmond's Ferry and Boston Ferry. It was very often referred to as The Ferry at Narrow Passage.

On 3 March, 1678-9, Capt. Andrew Edmonds presented a petition to the town for two acres, more or less, about the Narrow Passage on which he proposed to build a house and to build boats and "it is like, keep a ferry for the public as well as my private good". Edmonds asked for this accommodation on the ground of his service in the Indian War at Nissatteke and Warwick.

The town granted the land and directed the surveyor of the town that the land be "soe Layd out as ye townes privelledges to the ferry be not jinfringed theireby". Four acres, instead of two, was laid out for Edmonds, but it proved to be so poor that on 2 June, 1687, he was given in its place nine acres. The description and plat attached thereto show that it was at Red Bridge, lying between the river and Round Cove, later called Mummychaug Pond.

Edmond's petition is the first reference found to a ferry at this point and it is probable that it was the first ferry permanently established, though this may have been used from time to time as a crossing place for travelers, for 2 March, 1664, the Rehoboth townsmen were ordered to lay out a driftway to Narrow Passage. Although the Providence surveyor doubtless marked out a passageway through Edmond's land to the ferry, as he was directed, a public highway the whole distance from the center of the town was not laid out until many years afterwards. The line of travel seemed to be up Meeting Street to Hope, Hope to Angell, and down Angell Street to the river. The road up Meeting Street must have been a rather hard one, but not much worse than those that led up from the North and South Ferries in Kingstown. For many years there was a gate in this ferry road, a short distance beyond the house of Samuel Winsor, which was situated near the present corner of Angell and Paterson Streets. It was not until 1739 that the highway was laid out from Winsor's to the ferry landing. It followed in a general way the present course of South

Angell, East River and Waterman Streets. As early as 1706 there was a highway from the south part of the town following the course of Governor Street north to the road leading to the Narrow Passage.

Capt. Edmonds continued to operate the ferry until his death in 1695, when he left it to his wife Mary until their son Andrew should become of age. The widow was to live in the house and have the profits of the ferry. Mrs. Edmonds died the same year. Andrew was then fourteen years of age and he is said to have operated the ferry for a while, though in 1704, John Haze (Hayes) ran it. The only John Hayes we have found in the Providence records bought land near the Presbyterian meeting house, 23 August, 1726, and died 29 August, 1744, leaving a son-in-law, John Randall. On 11 October 1707, Andrew Edmonds leased the ferry to John Mason of Rehoboth for seven years. John[3] Mason, (Noah,[2] Sampson[1]) at this time was the keeper of the Rehoboth side of the ferry and later became its owner. On 2 June, 1709, the three sons of Andrew Edmonds sold the ferry land and house to Thomas Olney for £120 current silver.

On 1 February, 1716, Thomas Olney and his wife Patience sold the property for £150 to Noah and Timothy Mason of Rehoboth. In September, 1731, Noah Mason sold his share to Timothy.

Timothy Mason was drowned 9 December, 1742, and the land and ferry right fell to his eldest son, John. John died 28 April, 1754. He lived in Rehoboth and his will reads "it is my will the income of my house and land and of the ferry be for the bringing up my son, said house and land lying in the other government". The widow, Lydia Mason, married Israel Daggett and the son, Timothy, moved to Cumberland, R. I. Meanwhile Lydia probably hired someone to operate the ferry, for, in 1770, it was the "occupation" of William Daggett. According to Welcome A. Greene, William Daggett was only fourteen years old at this time. On 27 August, 1770, Lydia, with her husband, conveyed to Timothy her right of dower. On August 28, Timothy and his wife, for £150, sold the ferry property and privilege to Nathan Daggett, the father of William.

In 1773 a bridge was proposed across the Seekonk River at India Point, but it was opposed on account of the obstruction to navigation and so the ferry continued. In 1792 a bridge was again proposed both at India Point and at the Narrow Passage, and a charter was granted for a toll bridge to be known as Central Bridge, to be constructed at Narrow Passage. The prime mover in this scheme was Moses Brown, though Nicholas and Hope Brown, William Daggett, and Lemuel Wyatt, the owner of the Rehoboth side of the ferry, were interested. The bridge was open for traffic 3 September 1793. The bridge was a wooden structure painted red and was often known as Moses Brown's bridge, and, later and more commonly, as Red Bridge. On 13 September, 1793, William and Mary Daggett sold to the Proprietors of Central Bridge a small piece of land at the end of the bridge for $100, and 8 September, 1795, they sold to the Proprietors the whole nine acres of the ferry property with buildings and wharf. An anonymous writer, but one who seemed to have a thorough knowledge of engineering, and an intimate acquaintance with the bridges over the Seekonk, said, that the timbers in the old ferry landing place could still be seen about seventy feet south of the west end of the bridge. The stone work of the wharf and probably the same timbers, are even now visible and are shown in the illustration under "Ferry Landings". This is the tradition among boatmen at the present time.

15 February, 1807, Red Bridge and India Bridge were carried away by a freshet and the bridge at Pawtucket was also partially destroyed. Edward Augustus Kendall states that, while the new bridge was building over the Pawtucket on the road to Rehoboth, communication was by a rope ferry. This was probably in the latter part of the summer, as Kendall was in Hartford June 1, and traveled quite extensively in Connecticut before going to Rhode Island. President Timothy Dwight writes that in 1807, presumably in the autumn, "while cross-

ing the ferry just below [Pawtucket falls] in an oblique direction near a mile in extent, during almost the whole of which it was visible, I had a remarkably fine view of this cataract." This appears to have been another temporary ferry. No other reference to it has been found.

REHOBOTH TO PROVIDENCE

AT NARROW PASSAGE

The same names were applied to this ferry as to that in the opposite direction except that it was, of course, called Providence Ferry, instead of Boston Ferry, as a ferry was named from the town to which it ran.

The following entry is found in the Plymouth records under the date 1 March, 1663-4: "Richard Bulloucke is alowed by the Court to keep the ferrey there, soe that he make a horse boate to ferrey over horses is also lycenced to sell liquors to strangers and passengers, but not to town dwellers". On 20 March 1664 it is entered on the records of the town of Rehoboth that Richard Bullock had been licensed to sell strong liquors.

Before this time Richard Bullock had granted to him three acres in Watchemoket Neck bounded west on the river, north on the land of Anthony Perry and south on the land of John Woodcock. He also had a lot at the end of his lot to build a wharf and storehouse. One might think that, from this description, it would be easy to locate this ferry exactly, but we have not been able to do this, although we have made an extensive search of the records of Plymouth and of Bristol County and of the town of Rehoboth. The fact that Bullock had land in Watchemoket Neck led us to assume that this ferry was where Washington Bridge now is, but when we learned that land so far north as Red Bridge and even Ten Mile River, was described as in Watchemoket Neck, it appeared that, so far as indicated by the description, the ferry might have been at the location of either Red Bridge or Washington Bridge.

Indeed one might expect that the first ferry would be established at the former place, as it is a more direct route between the centres of population in Taunton, Rehoboth and Providence and the river is narrower at this point. The fact that the townsmen of Rehoboth were directed to lay out a driftway to Narrow Passage, 2 March, 1664, lends color to the view that a ferry was established at this location.

Prof. Charles J. Bullock has shown that Richard Bullock's home lot, and his wharf lot, were on the northerly side of Ten Mile River between Roger Williams Street and Wilson Avenue. It seems altogether likely therefore that his ferry was to be established at the nearest suitable place which would be at Narrow Passage, rather than at so distant a place as India Bridge. It has, however, been suggested that it might have been from Bullock's home lot to Narrow Passage, or perhaps to Bailey's Cove in Providence.

Although Richard Bullock had a ferry license 1 March 1663-4 and the townsmen of Rehoboth were ordered to lay out a driftway to the Narrow Passage March 2 of the same year, and although 17 November, 1700, the selectmen laid out a highway to the Ferry Place, no positive evidence has been found of the establishment of a ferry on that side of the river until 1704. Samuel Mason of Rehoboth petitioned for a license to keep a ferry at a place called the Narrow Passage (used as a ferry on the Providence side by John Haze). On 11 April, 1704, the license was granted. This ferry seemed to have remained in the hands of the Mason family until 1782, though the exact ownership has not been determined for the whole period. On 9 April, 1711, Samuel Mason sold to his nephew, Noah Mason, half of the ferry property. On the same day Noah Mason sold the same property to his brother John, who was called ferry keeper and had presumably been operating the ferry for his uncle Samuel.

This John Mason died in 1716 and on the division of his estate his half of the ferry property went to his brother Timothy. Noah Mason had a daughter Mary, who married Samuel Barstow, and on the death of Noah in 1744, the latter left all his right in the ferry, with his dwelling house there, to his daughter Mary, but if she died without issue, it was to go to his son John. Samuel Barstow was inn keeper and ferry keeper and was drowned 29 August, 1752. They had no children and the widow died before 1757. The ferry property therefore went to her brother, John Mason. During a good part of his life he was under guardianship. It appears that he must have become possessed of the whole ferry property, for 6 August, 1782, his guardians sold it for 955 milled dollars to Lemuel Wyatt of Rehoboth.

The property at this time contained six acres. Wyatt was given the privilege of landing on the remainder of the Mason land with his ferryboat when it became necessary and of taking gravel from the adjoining Ridge Hill to repair the wharf. Welcome A. Greene says that the landing place on the Rehoboth side was at about the centre of the location of the present Standard Oil wharf, some 300 feet south of Red Bridge. From this point the road extended in a slanting way northeasterly up the hill. A portion of it can now be seen leading out of Massasoit Avenue under a big oak tree, a few rods north of Waterman Avenue. On Cushing and Wallings map of Providence, 1854, this is called Ferry Street.

Providence to Rehoboth

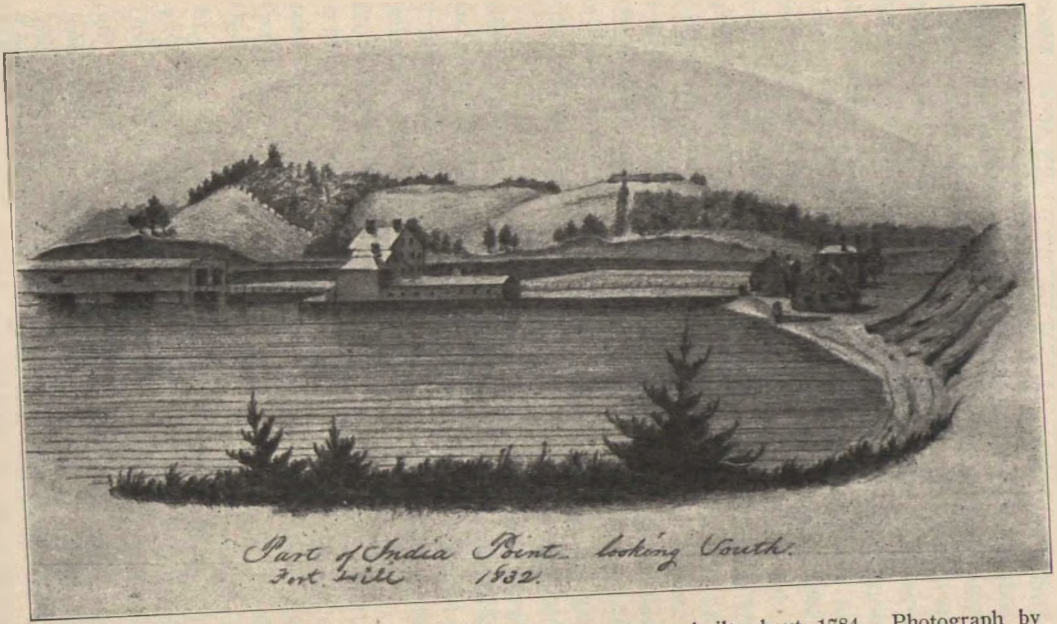
at Watchemoket

This was called the Lower Ferry to distinguish it from the Upper Ferry at the Narrow Passage where Red Bridge now is. It was also called Fuller's Ferry. Doubtless all the ferries were frequently called by the name of the town to which the traveler was going. This was certainly called Providence Ferry by persons approaching this city and by residents of Rehoboth.

Although it is probable that a ferry was established from Watchemoket to Tockwotten in very early times and was re-established by Josiah Fuller in 1739, there is no evidence that there was a ferry in the opposite direction until 1777. Shortly before this, Caleb Fuller, part owner of the ferry on the Rehoboth side, had moved to Providence, hired land and built a pier. This was probably the ferry landing in possession of the Browns in 1784. On the eighth day of the eighth month, 1784, a lease was given to Benjamin Martin of Providence by Nicholas, Joseph, John and Moses Brown. The lease was to be for a term of seven years beginning the seventh day of the third month 1782. It granted to Martin the ferry privilege at Tockwotten with the wharf and small house thereon erected, and four rods square of land above the ferry place on the hill for a garden. In payment for the lease Martin was to build a gambrel roof house twenty-five feet square, the character of which was carefully specified and which was to become the property of the Browns at the expiration of the lease. He was also to dig out the bank above the building then at the ferry way and to build a wharf before the door.

The Brown brothers owned quite a tract of land about India Point, which they had purchased in 1764. This will be referred to a little later when the location of the old ferry wharf is discussed. John Brown was apparently desirous of getting complete control of this ferry, for he purchased the Rehoboth side in 1786. Perhaps this was because he hoped to build a bridge and thought that if he owned the ferry it would prevent possible obstruction by a hostile ferry owner. An attempt had been made in 1773 to construct a bridge, but it had failed. Later John Brown bought his brothers' shares in this land and in the ferry privilege. In 1792 the South Bridge Society was organized and included in it were John and Nicholas Brown. The Society was authorized to build a bridge at or near the place called Tockwotten Point, or Fuller's Ferry, or sometimes called Lower Ferry, at the south end of Providence. The tolls were to be no higher than the rates of ferriage. The bridge was opened for traffic 12 April, 1793.

At this period, and for many years afterwards, this portion of Providence was a gently sloping plain terminating in a high,


Part of India Point looking South.
Fort Hill 1832.

The small gambrel-roof house on the right is the ferry house built about 1784. Photograph by courtesy of John Hess, from painting by Edward L. Peckham. Owned by the Rhode Island Historical Society.

steep bank near the shore of the river on both the east and the south. This is well shown in a painting by Edward F. Peckham about 1832 preserved in the library of the Rhode Island Historical Society. This picture also plainly shows the ferry house and it is readily seen why the ferryman was allowed to have his garden at the top of the bank. The ferry was reached by a slanting road, now Hill Street, and thence along the shore to the ferry. In the layout of this shore road, 17 April, 1784, it is called the street running from Fox Point to the Lower Ferry. This later became India Street. The appearance of the ferry house is shown in Peckham's sketch and the location of the lot is known exactly. The will of John Brown, 13 November, 1802, leaves the lot and wharf and old ferry house to his daughter, Alice Mason. The lot was described as sixty-eight feet wide fronting on a forty foot street and running east to the channel. This street was afterwards laid out as Ferry Street, now known as Gano Street, and ran to Governor Fenner's. The house was described as twenty-five and one half feet square, one story high with a gambrel roof and it was valued at $800 and was occupied by John Vinson (Vincent). Alice Mason was the wife of James B. Mason and the lot is again described in the division of the Mason property, in 1826. This lot with the house upon it is clearly shown on a plat of the Mason property in 1843. It was located at what is now the southeast corner of Gano and Tockwotten Streets.

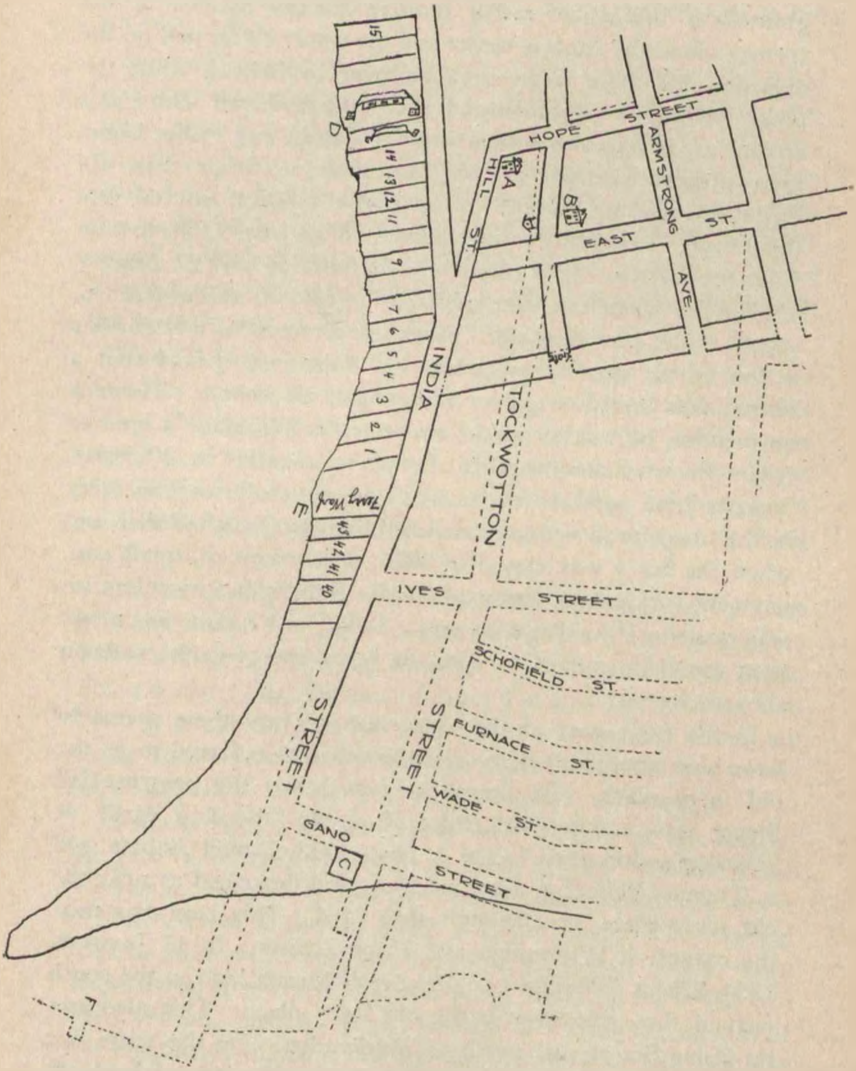
There must have been a ferry between Watchemoket and Providence during the latter part of the seventeenth or early eighteenth century, but it was probably abandoned for a good many years previous to 1739. There is some doubt as to the location of the old ferry landing in Providence. The first reference to it which has been found is in the will of Philip Tillinghast, 12 February, 1732, in which he leaves to his son Elisha "my lott of land being at the place called Tuncowotten or the Old Ferry Point at the lower end of said Providence Neck." This was the land later owned by the four Browns, previously referred to, and embraced six or eight acres and extended from above the present Washington Bridge to the shore below the present railroad bridge. In another plat of the Mason land there is shown a point extending into the river towards the southeast called Mill Point, which may crudely represent the Ferry Point of the old deed. In a deed of a strip of the shore from Elisha Tillinghast to Daniel Abbott, 13 November, 1738, this is called the Rocky Point and was described as being near the old ferry place.

This specific way in which these old documents refer to the "Old Ferry Point" makes it certain that this must have been the landing place of the ferry-boats long before 1732 and makes it almost as certain that this ferry place had been, long before that, abandoned.

Daniel Abbott had, in 1735, become possessed of a considerable tract of land lying west of Elisha Tillinghast and extending beyond what is now Hope Street. Abbott platted this property and three plats, made at different times, are preserved.

On 20 February, 1738-9, Daniel Abbott and Caleb Lyon petitioned the general assembly for the privilege of establishing a ferry at the mouth of the Seekonk River near the old ferry place. Caleb Lyon proposed to open a new and shorter road from Providence to Rhode Island through his land on the Watchemoket side. Abbott undoubtedly intended to have this ferry landing on the Providence side at a lot which he had reserved for this purpose and which is designated "Ferry Wharf" on the plat preserved in the library of the Rhode Island Historical Society. This was on the southerly side of India Street east of the angle in the curb and nearly opposite the western end of the present Union Oil Company's property. We have not found the slightest evidence that this lot was ever used as a ferry landing. It was a part of Abbott's scheme which fell through when Fuller established his ferry.

Somewhat later in 1739, Elisha Tillinghast presented a petition to the general assembly for a ferry from Old Ferry Point over the Seekonk River to Rehoboth. This petition seems to have been lost, but it is referred to in a petition of Josiah Fuller of Rehoboth who strongly urged that the ferry be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INDIA STREET
TOCKWOTTON STREET
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FURNACE ST.
WADE ST.
GANO STREET
C
F

Plat of Tockwotton, or India Point. Dotted lines show present streets. Solid lines form old plats, chiefly Daniel Abbott's plats, middle of eighteenth century. A, Darling's house; B, John Thomas house; C, Ferry house, 1784; D, Shipyard; E, lot kept by Abbott for a ferry; F, Railroad bridge.

granted to Tillinghast rather than to Abbott, because at the former's land the bank is easier and the water better and on the opposite side there is an open highway to Bristol, while the other landing is only tolerated and is encumbered with gates and bars. It was also stated that Tillinghast and Fuller began their preparations for a ferry six months earlier than did Deputy Governor Abbott. Apparently politics entered into this affair. A committee was appointed 12 July, 1739, to consider the matter. This committee did nothing and 27 August, 1739, other members were added to it, and it was ordered to report at the next meeting. There is no record of any further action by the general assembly and it is not believed that a license was issued to either Tillinghast, or Abbott. There is no mention of a ferry in the transfer of Tillinghast's land to Allen Brown, nor in Allen Brown's transfer to Nicholas, Joseph, John and Moses Brown. As we shall see, the ferry in the opposite direction was established by Josiah Fuller and when the ferry was closed in 1776, on account of small pox, payment for damage was made to the Fullers, but no reference was made to Providence owners. Tillinghast's name has never been found in connection with the ferry except in the petition above referred to.

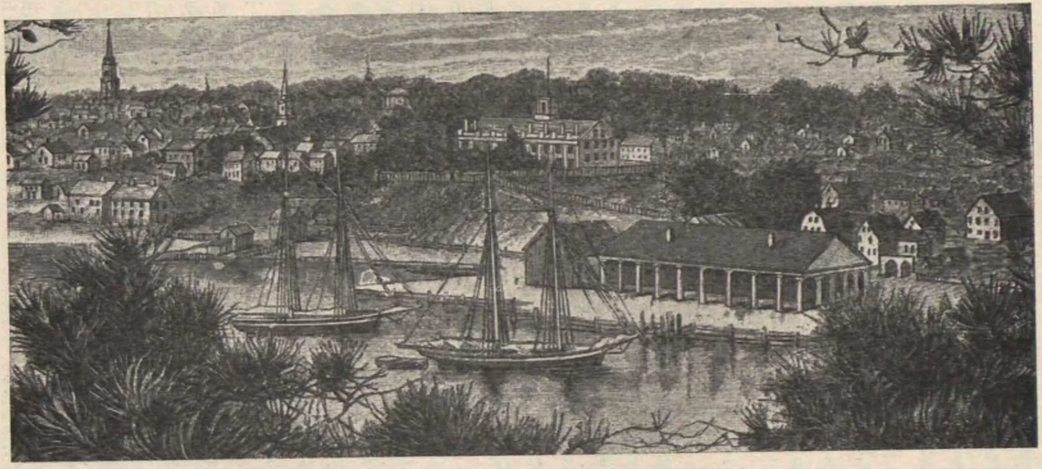
In the early part of the eighteenth century there seems to have been another landing place which was referred to as the old ferry place. On the shore just below the present Hill Street was a ship yard called in deeds "the ship yard" or "Darling's ship yard." On 6 June, 1753, Daniel Abbott sold to Thomas Bennet a small piece of land described as near the old ferry place, or Darling's ship yard. This land was near the corner of Wickenden and Hope Streets. In 11 January, 1754, Elisha Tillinghast sold to Noah Mason land in the south part of the neck towards the old ferry place. This also was on Hope Street just north of Wickenden. On the same day Daniel Abbott sold to Noah Mason a small piece of land adjoining the above and also described as near the old ferry place. These deeds seem to show conclusively that at this period the shore at the foot of Hope Street was known as the old ferry place.

It would appear that this ferry place could not have been used for some time, or it would not have been called the old ferry place and also that its use as a ferry landing had continued for many years, otherwise the name would not have clung to it so persistently. It is likely then, that, for a time, it was the landing place of the first ferry. Another possibility is that Fuller's Ferry was established at this point in 1739 and a few years later was removed to its permanent location on the easterly side of Tockwotten Point.

John Thomas owned the land where is now the Home for Aged Women and, in response to a petition of many of his fellow citizens, he was given a license to keep a public house for those who pass the ferry. This petition is not dated, but it was probably between 1750 and 1754. John Thomas, in his will, dated 12 August 1758 described his house as "a little northwest from Fuller's ferry."

On 26 April, 1756, Elisha Tillinghast sold to Comfort Wheaton a lot at Tockwotten fronting south on the road to Fuller's Ferry. This lot was on what is now Tockwotten Street a short distance east of John Thomas' lot, showing that the way to the ferry at this time was not down Hill Street, but along Tockwotten Street, and later plats indicate that it turned down the hill to the shore at about where Ives Street is.

In the earliest times a highway was laid out "at the head of the lots" which exists to-day as Hope Street. At first there were only two ways to this street from Main Street, one where Meeting Street is, and the other at Power Street. The ancient road to the lower ferry was doubtless up Power Street, down Hope Street and Hill Street and along India Street to the Old Ferry Point. In later years, perhaps not until the middle of the eighteenth century, Wickenden Street was laid out and was called "the highway leading to Fuller's Ferry." It was so designated in 1754, 1781, and 1793.



India Point, or Tockwotton, Providence, about 1840. From a wood-cut in *The Providence Plantations.* Oil painting, owned by Rhode Island Historical Society. Large structure with columns is railroad station where ferry-boat landed. Hotel is on hill. Small building on shore to left is site of "old ferry wharf."

REHOBOTH TO PROVIDENCE

AT WATCHEMOKET

There was certainly a ferry at the location of Washington Bridge in early times, for, as we have seen, a deed of 1732 describes India Point as the Old Ferry Point. That the ferry was operated from the Rehoboth side only, seems probable, for the ownership of the land on the Providence side has been well traced and there is nothing to suggest that any of the owners were interested in a ferry, nor is there a reference to such a Providence ferry in either the town or colony records. We at one time thought that Richard Bullock's ferry of 1664 was at Watchemoket, but the evidence obtained by Prof. Bullock points to the Narrow Passage.

A possible indication that this ferry was established in 1664 is the fact that Arthur Fenner who owned much land at India Point in Providence, on 17 December, 1664, secured a deed from the town of the shore, or "mere bank," around the point and was allowed to build a fence, but was to put in stiles for persons who pass on foot, or who have occasion to land goods. The towns very generally, kept the title to the bank a little back from the shore and we perhaps may surmise that Fenner, fearing that a ferryman from the opposite side might soon be seeking for shore rights, secured this grant from the town.

That this was called the "Old Ferry Point" and the fact that we could find no reference to a ferry here during the early part of the eighteenth century, suggest that it had long been abandoned.

In March, 1738-9, the Bristol county court gave Caleb Lyon authority to establish a ferry between Rehoboth and Providence at a place called the Old Ferry Point and the rates of ferriage were fixed. Lyon owned land about Fort Hill. Whether he ever established a ferry we do not know, but quite likely he did not, for he and Daniel Abbott of Providence applied to the Rhode Island legislature for a ferry license which it does not appear was ever granted.

Although we have found no record of Josiah Fuller's petition for a ferry, or the granting of a license to him, there is little doubt that he established his ferry from Watchemoket to Tockwotten in 1739. We have already learned of the controversy between him and Tillinghast on one side, and Caleb Lyon and Daniel Abbott on the other, and in July, 1739, it was stated that Tillinghast and Fuller had begun their preparations for a ferry six months earlier than had Lyon and Abbott. There is no evidence that any of these would-be ferrymen, except Josiah Fuller, really established a ferry and there is no definite proof when he established his, but he probably did at the time when, in 1739, he was making preparations for it. Fuller's Ferry was mentioned in the acts fixing rates of ferriage in 1747, 1750, 1752 and 1767. In 1752 John Thomas maintained quarantine against the introduction of small pox at Fuller's Ferry for 153 days.

Josiah Fuller was an inhabitant of Rehoboth owning land in Watchemoket Neck bounding on the salt water. He died in 1753 and by his will he left to his wife Mehitabel the old house and the land at the house and the use of the ferry. He had sons, Oliver, Caleb and Noah and daughters, Mary Hayes who afterward married John Jones and Sibel Blake. In his inventory were mentioned a two-mast boat, a scow and oars and a canoe. Probably the boys, as they grew up, assisted their father with the ferry and after his death continued to operate it. At any rate, Oliver, the oldest son, 12 September, 1757, calls himself ferryman in a deed to Caleb, whom he calls laborer, of half of the dwelling house, which his father Josiah built, with the land about it. Josiah Fuller's land went to his three sons, but no record has been found of its division. In 1765 Noah Fuller sold to Caleb the upper half of the ferry house in Watchemoket Neck, left by his honored father. The day after he bought Noah's share in the ferry house, Caleb sold to his brother-in-law, John Jones Jr., a small piece of land with dwelling, bounded north on the road to Fuller's Ferry. This road is shown by other deeds to be Warren Avenue as it was before the present Washington Bridge was built. This dwelling apparently was not the ferry house. Caleb bought this back in 1779.

In 1771 Mehitabel Fuller, widow of Josiah, sold to her son Caleb thirty rods of land extending to the channel of the river.

In 1773 an unsuccessful effort was made to build a bridge at the Lower Ferry. Caleb Fuller was on the committee and his residence was given as Providence.

On 19 October, 1775, Caleb Fuller, ferryman, sold to Spencer Beers, of Barrington, the north half of a dwelling house near the Lower Ferry, the other half of which belonged to Moses Blake, the whole lot being bounded on Caleb's land, then in possession of his mother. According to this deed Caleb Fuller lived in Providence where he continued to reside until he sold the ferry in 1781. This small piece of property which was surrounded by Caleb Fuller's land was retained by the Beers after the ferry property was sold by Fuller.

The following year smallpox began to break out in Providence and 12 July, 1776, the town voted to hire houses at Tockwotten in which to inoculate persons against the disease and the committee was directed to "estimate the weekly Damage that will accrue to the owners of the Lower Ferry by means of inoculation being carried on at Tockwotten." On July 19 it was voted that Mr. Caleb Fuller, who kept the ferry, be prohibited from transporting any person whom he suspected had been where smallpox was prevalent. Later on, cases of natural smallpox were cared for in these houses and, as a result of this, the ferry was closed 6 November, 1776. Objection was made to the care of smallpox in this locality owing to danger to troops, and early in February the hospital was moved to North Providence. Public notice was given in the newspapers that the ferry was open to travel 15 February, 1777. Caleb Fuller presented to the town a bill for damages to himself and his mother resulting from the closure of the ferry. The damages for the time it was closed were fixed at the rate of £45 per year for the whole ferry on the east side, in which his mother had "a right of improvement" for which she claimed £12 per year. Caleb Fuller was allowed £8.17.3 and

Mrs. Mehitabel Fuller £3.6.0. Their receipts are on file at the city hall in Providence.

As soon as the ferry was reopened Caleb Fuller got into trouble with his brother Oliver. Caleb had hired the shore on the Providence side and had built a pier and had been to great expense on account of a boat. Meanwhile his mother had leased her half of the ferry to Oliver Fuller of Rehoboth. In March, 1777, Caleb Fuller of Providence petitioned the Rhode Island general assembly that Oliver presumed to improve the whole of the ferry without regard to Caleb, though it had been customary to improve the ferry in turns, every other week. Caleb claimed that there was not enough business for two boats and that the ferryman must have an exclusive franchise if he is to tend the ferry properly. It is endorsed on the petition that the Fullers were to take turns every other week, Caleb beginning the first day of the next week. There is no record that Caleb Fuller ever owned land on the west side of the river and we have found no evidence as to where he built his pier.

We read in the Providence Gazette that, 17 March, 1781, a party of citizens proceeded to the Lower Ferry to meet General Washington on his arrival from Warren. It cost $96 to carry Washington and his party across the ferry.

On 28 April, 1781, Caleb Fuller of Providence, ferryman, for 3750 Spanish milled dollars sold to his nephew Josiah Blake of Leicester, Mass. several pieces of property in Rehoboth together with the ferry-boat tackle and appurtenances and the right and title to Fuller's Ferry, so called, on the east side of the river. One piece of land, containing about an acre, was bounded north on the land of John Jones, south on that of Anthony Perry, west on the channel of the river and east on the line between Massachusetts and Rhode Island and contained a dwelling house, wharf and other buildings. This presumably was the ferry lot. At this time the dividing line between Massachusetts and Rhode Island was the bank of the river, or high water mark on the east side, and consequently this lot was in Providence and the deed was recorded in Providence and also in Bristol County. There was also another one acre lot on the shore and a nine acre lot on the north side of the road from Fuller's Ferry to Warren and a sixteen acre lot south of this road. Both of these large lots bounded west on the bank of the river.

The one acre lot containing the wharf and dwelling house must have been a long narrow strip along the shore of the river extending from a little south of Warren Avenue to a point below the location of the railroad bridge. The dwelling and wharf were undoubtedly the ferry house and ferry wharf. Their exact location we do not know, but it must have been somewhere between the location of the old Washington Bridge and the present structure, probably nearer the latter. John Brown, who bought the ferry and built the bridge, by his will, 13 November, 1802, left to his son James, the ferry house northeast of India Bridge and the cooper's shop, or other tenement, with lot on which they stood, which was built and filled up between high and low water mark, so as to be in the state of Rhode Island.

Blake mortgaged this property to Fuller and later to Jacob Comstock and shortly after, 20 August, 1782, sold it to Daniel and Jacob Comstock of Connecticut. Three days later the Comstocks mortgaged the land, buildings, and ferry right to John Brown of Providence, and 13 January, 1786, the Comstocks sold the property to Brown. John Brown thus became possessed of both sides of the ferry, which he held until the bridge was built in 1793.

BARRINGTON AND WARREN

KELLEY'S FERRY

This was also called Toogood's Ferry and Swansea Ferry. It was located where Kelley's Bridge now is over Warren River, sometimes called Swansea River. The exact date of establishment of this ferry is not known. According to testimony given by Joseph Mason, 22 April, 1748, William Ingraham was the first ferryman, nearly seventy years before, that is about 1678. In that year he was granted six acres on the east side of New Meadow Neck south of Jeremiah Child. As early as 1670 landing places were ordered laid out, but whether these were for ferries is not stated.

On 19 October, 1681, a petition was presented for the layout of a highway through Brooks' pasture (now the village of Warren) to the ferry to New Meadow Neck. There was also the following entry "That as to ferry over both Rivers it is left according to former order of the Townsmen." Unfortunately no such order can be found, but it would appear that, before this date, ferries had been established over both Warren and Barrington Rivers. On 13 March, 1681-2, it was voted that six acres be left perpetually for the accommodation of a person to keep the ferry. It was to be improved for the use and benefit of the town, as they shall see fit. On 29 January, 1682-3, there was granted to William Ingraham by the ferry, a yard room and liberty to wharf. As was referred to under ferry roads, the highway leading over this ferry was laid out 15 May, 1688. On the 1 July, 1697, the ferry lot, ordered in 1681-2, had not been laid out, but in 1699 a layout was reported by the committee. The lot abutted on the east bank of the river and apparently was just below the ferry. There seemed to be some difference of opinion as to whether this ferry lot was given in fee to the ferryman, or leased to him together with the ferry. The proprietors and the town apparently held to the latter view. On 13 January, 1701-2, the selectmen were authorized to let the town lands in Brooks' pasture to Nathaniel Toogood at the ferry. On 26 January, 1713-14, the proprietors appointed a committee to let out the ferry to some able person, the rent to be for the use of the proprietors, and it was voted that the town land on Brooks' Pasture Point should be rented out with the ferry, or as the committee might think best. The ferry lot was again laid out in 1725 and still again 22 April, 1742. According to Bicknell, Duncan Kelley, who at this time, operated the ferry, claimed the right to the ferry as his own personal property. Certainly the deposition of Joseph Mason that the ferry and the ferry land had always been the property of the town would indicate that someone was taking the contrary view.

From what has gone before, it would appear that the town considered that it controlled the ferry franchise and could lease it as it pleased. In 1694, after the union of Plymouth with Massachusetts, an act placed the control of ferries in the colonial court of general sessions, except such ferries as were already established by the towns. Although this particular ferry had long been an affair of the proprietors, or of the town of Swansea, the court issued a license for a ferry under the new law and their action was sustained by the court of common pleas. Nevertheless the town continued to grant the ferry franchise for many years, even until after the annexation of this region to Rhode Island, when the general assembly assumed control.

Unlike most ferries, both sides of this ferry were always controlled by the same ferryman. This was because the river was so narrow that one man could easily tend both sides. The first ferryman was William Ingraham, but some time between October 1694 and December 1696, the court leased the ferry and at the same time the town leased the ferry land to Nathaniel Toogood. Mr. Ingraham and his son, nevertheless, continued to operate a ferry. Nathaniel Toogood brought suit against Ingraham and obtained a verdict of £3.7.8. On 14 February, 1700-1, Toogood obtained a five year lease of the ferry over Swansea River at the usual place near his house. In April of the same year he was elected constable, but was released on the ground that his duties would interfere with the operation of the ferry.

On 13 April, 1703, John Toogood, after the death of his father, Nathaniel, obtained the remainder of his father's lease from the court, notwithstanding the fact that, on April 9, the town had voted that the selectmen should take care of the settling of the ferry according to their discretion for the town's advantage. According to the testimony of Joseph Mason, Duncan Kelley followed Toogood as ferryman. After the death of John Toogood, his widow, 26 January, 1713-14, petitioned the town that it would consider her condition and give her the last two years' rent of the ferry. It was ordered that the treasurer abate one half of the rent for one year. The name of Toogood persisted, for in a deed, 1 August, 1720, the place is referred to as Toogood's Ferry. It was even called Toogood's Ferry as late as 1736. The next official record we have found relating to this ferry was 18 November, 1728, when a committee was appointed to make conveyance to "Mr. Dunkain Killey" ferryman, of land where his house stands (belonging to the proprietors) so long as he keep the ferry. The proprietors were to have the refusal, if he wished to sell. The town of Barrington, including New Meadow Neck and Phebe's Neck, was set off from Swansea 18 November, 1717, so that the ferry was thereafter in the control of that town. After the death of Duncan Kelley, a committee of the selectmen of Barrington, 12 July, 1736, granted a license to his son, John Kelley of Barrington, to operate a ferry at a place known as Toogood's or Kelley's ferry, for seven years at forty shillings per year. On 28 May, 1746, Barrington and a part of Swansea were transferred by royal decree from the jurisdiction of Massachusetts to that of Rhode Island and 27 January, 1746-7, incorporated as the town of Warren. A few months later, 20 July, 1747, the town of Warren voted that, as Mr. John Kelley had for many years hired and kept the ferry "to good acceptance," the town council was authorized to lease it to him, but he would not accept, and on August 10 the town council leased the ferry to Samuel Low for five years for £8 per year. On August 27 the town voted to lay out the ferry lot, which was done on August 31. This lot contained two and one half acres of upland and beach and extended forty-six rods south from land formerly laid out to Nathaniel Toogood to the lot where John Kelley lived. There is no further record of Samuel Low in connection with the ferry and it is certain that the legislature did not recognize the action of the town, for a committee was sent from Warren to the general assembly to confer about the ferries, though concerning what is not stated. As a matter of fact, the ferry was leased, 9 September, 1747, to John Kelley for seven years by a committee appointed by the general assembly, for a copy of this lease is preserved in the office of the secretary of state. The lease requires the ferry to be free for the town's business on days of the town meeting, the town council meeting and on training days. The next reference which we find to the ownership of this ferry is in March, 1777, when John Kelley was paid by the state for the transportation of soldiers. As has been referred to in the discussion of ferry-boats, Duncan Kelley, the proprietor of the ferry on the east side of Barrington, was, in June, 1792, permitted to extend a warp across the river. This was undoubtedly for the purpose of operating a rope ferry. It seems probable that the ferry had previously been operated in this way, but, owing to the objection of those who wished to navigate the river, he obtained legal sanction from the general assembly. In February, 1794, Duncan Kelley obtained from the legislature permission to erect a bridge at the location of his ferry. This was objected to by the town of Rehoboth, but without avail.

From these records it appears that the Ingrahams, the Toogoods, and the Kelleys all lived on the New Meadow Neck side of the ferry.

Phebe's Neck to New Meadow Neck

Barrington

It is said that during the early part of the eighteenth century there was a ferry from about where the end of the bridge now is on New Meadow Neck, to the lower end of Jenny's Lane. We have discovered no direct evidence of this, though there are two or three entries in the Barrington records which suggest that there was such a ferry. Before Barrington was incorporated and while this region was a part of Swansea, there was quite a settlement at the lower end of New Meadow Neck, and there was a Congregational meeting house there.

In 1710 a new meeting house was built on the west side of Barrington River, where it remained until 1737, at which time it was removed to its present location. During this period the meeting house was located just north of Jenny's Lane and a little east of the main high road. These facts give color to the tradition as to the location of the ferry. In 1717 there was a man named Thomas Davis living in what is now Warren. He sold his property 12 February, 1721-2. In both deeds he is called boatman. In 1736 the town of Barrington voted "that Capt. Thomas Davice shall have the liberty to shut up the highway in his farm by gates, if the court allow of it provided he allow and pay to the town three pounds a year for the period of three years." Presumably this highway was Jenny's Lane and the expression "for the benefit of the ferry" suggests that the town found it necessary to pay out money for the ferry, which it well might feel obliged to do, in order to keep the communities on the opposite banks of the river contented. However, the next year, the town changed its mind and voted to expend two years' rent of the ferry in the purchase of ammunition. This highway could not have been the one leading through Simon Davis's farm, for we know that in 1737 there was only one house on that farm, which was "improved" by Edward Bosworth. Nothing more has been learned about this ferry, or about Capt. Thomas Davis. He was not of the family of Simon Davis who owned the ferry farther down the river. A petition of the inhabitants of New Meadow Neck to the general assembly in May, 1771, stated that there was no ferry between that neck and Phebe's Neck.

Warren to Barrington

This was called Carr's Ferry, or Miller's Ferry.

Although the ferry in the opposite direction had been in operation about a dozen years, this ferry was not licensed until 1712. On 8 January, 1711-12, the selectmen of Swansea and Robert Jolls of Bristol petitioned, in behalf of Mr. Robert Carr, for a ferry over Swansea River opposite land purchased of said Jolls. Henry Brightman, at the same time presented a similar petition for a ferry opposite Slade's Ferry (at what is now Fall River). Both Carr and Brightman were given "encouragement that when they had made suitable provision and would give bond the petitions would be granted." In April, 1712, Brightman's Ferry was established and he was allowed to charge fourpence for a man and horse and twopence for a single person. Doubtless the same privilege was granted Robert Carr, though the only entry, a few lines below the above, reads as follows: "the Ferry from Bristol side over Swansey River at a place called Humphreys Ferry." Carr probably continued to operate the ferry until his death, for the ferry privilege was inventoried in his estate in 1722. Robert Carr was a shipwright, who had recently come to Swansea from Newport, and purchased fourteen acres of Robert Jolls, fronting on the river and abutting north on what is now Washington Street in Warren, but which was then called the highway leading to the ferry over to Wannamoisett Neck.

Robert Carr died 12 October, 1722, and it is possible that there was, for a considerable time, no ferryman on the Swansea side. At any rate the next reference we have found is a petition of Samuel Miller, in September, 1738, to keep a ferry between Swansea and Barrington, at a place called Humphrey's Ferry. This was referred to the next term and Mr. Edward Bosworth was allowed to keep it until further ordered. As we shall see, Bosworth was doubtless ferryman on the west bank of the river. In December the petition was again continued and in June of the following year the ferry was granted to Samuel Miller of Swansea.

In January, 1746-7, a petition was presented by certain freemen of Barrington to have the town meetings held alternately on each side of Capt. Miller's Ferry. Another petition asked for a separate township to be called New Swansea, and still another petition, signed by William Knowles and Daniel Luther alleges that "we understand that Captain Sam Miller intends to make use of a writing, which we have also signed in order to adjoin us to Barrington which we are utterly against and he knows it." The union of Barrington with a part of Swansea to form Warren and its transfer to Rhode Island, and the subsequent re-incorporation of Barrington, undoubtedly disturbed political affiliations and gave rise to many complaints. The difficulty in crossing the rivers was made an excuse for various demands.

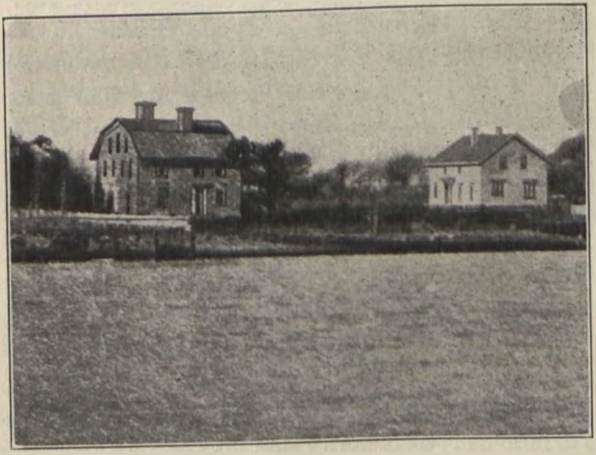
Samuel Miller died 6 April, 1748, and it is uncertain who operated the ferry for the next few years. Perhaps it was his son, Samuel, who 9 June, 1748, purchased from his brother Nathan, one acre with dwelling and wharf adjourning Caleb Carr. At any rate it was called Miller's Ferry in the acts fixing the rates of ferriage in 1750 and 1752. On the other hand there may have been no ferryman on the Warren side. It was called Martin's Ferry in 1756, and in 1762 Caleb Carr said there was no ferry from the Warren side.

Caleb Carr, the son of Robert Carr, had married Ruth Miller, daughter of Capt. Samuel Miller. He lived at the foot of Washington Street and kept a house of entertainment. In June, 1762, he petitioned the general assembly that he lived on the east side of Humphrey's Ferry and that it was kept only by Mr. Nathaniel Martin who lives on the west side and being a coaster and away a good deal of the time so that he cannot attend to it, therefore, Carr prays to be allowed to keep the ferry. It was granted to him for a period of seven years. The ferry was referred to as Caleb Carr's Ferry in 1765 and as Carr's Ferry in 1766. Caleb Carr died 13 July, 1767, and his inventory includes two small scows £6, and one ferry-boat £3. No further mention of this ferry has been found, though the other side was in active operation during the Revolution and for some years afterwards. Whether some of the family continued the ferry for a time, we do not know, but 15 September, 1770, Shuball Kinnicutt deeded land in Warren on the highway leading to Carr's Ferry. It is possible, of course, that this may have been merely the persistence of a name.

BARRINGTON TO WARREN

When this ferry was established the terminals were both in the town of Swansea in the Colony of Massachusetts, being in Phebe's Neck and Brook's Pasture respectively. The ancient landing places were at the foot of what is now called Ferry Lane in Barrington and Washington Street in Warren. It was called Humphrey's Ferry and Martin's Ferry.

In 1681 the proprietors of Sowams laid out house lots on the west side of Barrington River extending to the "Great Highway" which leads to Rumstick Neck. Several roads were laid out between these lots, but a number of changes were made in them. Capt. Simon Davis of Bristol purchased some of these lots as early as 29 December, 1694, and, at the time of his death, owned a farm of 105 acres. Capt. Davis never lived there, but leased the farm to various tenants. On 13 January, 1701-2, he petitioned by his tenant, Mr. Solomon Curtis, that he might have a license to keep a ferry over Swansea River near his house. The license was granted and the rates of ferriage fixed. Miss Virginia Baker of Warren tells us that Solomon Curtis died 20 April, 1711, and his gravestone is now standing at Tyler's Point. Undoubtedly the ferry was then leased to Samuel Humphrey who was the next tenant on Davis' farm. We found no record of this lease, but the lease of the opposite ferry in April, 1712, refers to Humphrey's Ferry. On 7 July, 1712, Capt. Davis obtained a seven years franchise for the ferry. Reference is made to the occupation of this farm by Samuel Humphrey in 1719 and 1724. Samuel Humphrey died in 1732 and his inventory, filed August 9, includes a ferry-boat and thirty-five bushels of Indian corn valued at £21.10.0. In a deed, 8 February, 1734, the Davis farm is referred to as in possession of the Humphreys, presumably the sons of Samuel, and it is likely that they continued to operate the ferry. It is probable that Edward Bosworth was the next tenant of the farm and that he kept the ferry. Edward Bosworth had joined the church in Barrington, which was not far from the ferry, by letter from Bristol in 1732, which indicates that he had recently removed to Barrington. In an agreement between the heirs of Simon Davis, 10 November, 1737, concerning a division of the farm, the latter was said to be improved by Edward Bosworth of Barrington. As has been referred to, the court, in September 1738, allowed Mr. Edward Bosworth, then ferryman, temporarily to keep the ferry in the opposite direction, presumably because he then had the ferry from the Barrington side. The Davis farm, called the Ferry Farm, was divided by the heirs, 6 February, 1737-8, into six portions. Through the farm ran a two rod road leading from the Great Highway to the ferry. This was the present Ferry Lane. The sixth division of the farm was a lot bounded south on the Ferry Road and east on the river with dwelling house and the privileges thereto belonging. Whether the privileges included the right to operate the ferry is not stated. This would seem to be therefore, the location, and perhaps the very house, occupied by the various tenants of the farm who had kept the ferry. This lot fell to Nicholas Davis who sold it, 16 June, 1738, to Samuel Millard (Miller). It was in September of that year that Samuel Miller petitioned to keep the ferry between Swansea and Barrington, which privilege he obtained in June 1740. Miller was at that time a resident on the Swansea side of the river. Meanwhile Edward Bosworth had purchased two other parts of the divided farm. It would appear, then, that Miller was hereafter the proprietor of the ferry and that Bosworth was out of it, at least for a time, unless by chance he might have been hired by Miller to tend the Barrington side. It is more likely, however, that Miller would employ his own son to tend the ferry. At all events we find that on 9 February, 1746-7, Samuel Miller of Warren sold to his son Samuel, sixteen and three quarters acres with dwelling house in Warren (recently Barrington) bounded east on the river and with the highway through it to the ferry. Samuel Miller, Sr. died 6 April, 1748, and 16 December, 1748, Samuel Miller, the son, sold to Edward Bosworth the property referred to in the above mentioned deed. Whether Edward Bosworth again became proprietor of the west side of the ferry, we do not know, but it seems probable that he may have done so, for Miller had moved to the opposite side of the river and undoubtedly established himself there as ferry keeper. Of course he may have tended the ferry in both directions, but it is more likely that Bosworth, who had previously been a ferryman and had just bought the ferry house, should again engage in the ferry business. In August 1751 Edward and Althea Bosworth, for £2200, sold to Nathaniel Martin the ferry property on the west side of the river. The only reference to Martin's Ferry under that name is in 1756 in the rates of ferriage. There can be no doubt, however, that Nathaniel Martin and his son operated the ferry for over fifty years. In 1762 Robert Carr, who then kept the Warren side of the ferry, complained that Mr. Nathaniel Martin, who had the other side of the ferry, was a "coaster" and was away a great deal of the time. Carr tried to get his franchise, but apparently did not succeed. Martin was a ship builder, as well as a mariner, and was prominent in the Revolution. Later on, perhaps as a result of Carr's complaints,



Ferry House at Martin's Ferry, Barrington. Built before the Revolution. Not now standing. From a photograph owned by Miss Annie Heath, Rumstick Road, Barrington.

perhaps because he had become a capitalist, Martin employed ferrymen. William Brown, a brother-in-law of Martin, is called ferryman in a deed, 25 August, 1770. He was doubtless ferryman on this ferry and very likely had been for several years, as it is a tradition of the family that his daughter Amy, from whom one of us is descended, was born in the "Ferry House" 1 August 1762. This house, demolished many years ago, is shown in the illustration. In 1776 Martin received from the general assembly £2.19.0 for keeping sheep, billeting and ferriage. His son, Luther Martin, received pay from the state for ferrying troopers across the river on Muster Day, 2 October, 1798. The receipt was signed "Luther Martin ferriman." This is the last reference to the ferry which we have found, but Bicknell, writing in 1898, says that foot passengers continued to be ferried over within the memory of people now living. A petition for the establishment of a bridge over Barrington River, presented to the general assembly in February, 1802, states that Martin's Ferry had been abandoned.

BRISTOL TO PORTSMOUTH

BRISTOL FERRY

The ferry from Bristol to Portsmouth, on the Island of Rhode Island, has always been called by the above name, probably because it was owned by the Bristol proprietors. No other name has been found. Although there was a ferry in the opposite direction, probably many years before King Philip's war, the lands on the Bristol side were in possession of the Indians and it was not until the latter were exterminated and the town of Bristol planted, that the ferry here under consideration was established. The grant of the Indian lands, commonly called the Mount Hope lands, by Plymouth Colony to the proprietors of Bristol is known as the "Grand Deed." It is dated 14 September, 1680, and reads that the proprietors are to "have possess and enjoy the whole and sole benefit privilege and advantage of each and every the Ferries that shall be made within the precints of said Necks." The division of the lands in accordance with this deed is contained in the "Grand Articles." These Articles, which were actually signed before the Grand Deed was given, namely 27, August 1680, provided that there should be a ferry set up and a farm laid out thereunto and a house built thereon which was to be a charge on the proprietors. That this was promptly done we know, because the ferry was referred to in a division of meadow lands made 18 November 1681. Evidently the proprietors not only kept the Ferry Farm in their possession, and built the ferry house, but they also built the wharf and owned the ferry-boat. The proprietary, was divided into thirty-two shares which, as in other proprietaries, were soon on the market and were frequently bought and sold. Thus 20 February, 1683-4, the proprietors sold to Capt. Benjamin Church one sixteenth part of the proprietary, including one sixteenth of the Ferry Farm, with the buildings, fences, ferry-boat, oars and sails. It is uncertain how the ferry was operated during the time it was held by the proprietors. It may have been leased, or the proprietors may have employed someone to operate it. Probably the former method was followed. Before 1718 the larger part of the Ferry Farm and ferry had come into the possession of Nathaniel Blagrove who, in turn, sold twenty-seven thirty-seconds to Capt. Samuel Little, 22 March, 1717, and on 22 September, 1718, he sold two and one half thirty-seconds more. The Ferry Farm remained in the possession of Capt. Samuel Little until his death, 8 January, 1739-40. Little had become financially involved and some parts of the farm had been set off to others in settlement of claims and perhaps some portions had been voluntarily sold. After Little's death, sixty-five acres of the farm, with the dwelling house and wharf, were assigned to his widow Hannah as dower. On 2 December, 1740, Samuel Little, the son of Capt. Samuel Little, sold to Thomas Lawton his share of the Ferry Farm after the debts of his father were paid. On 6 April, 1741, his sister, Mary Little, sold to Lawton her share of the

Ferry Farm. Meanwhile the widow Hannah had married Josiah Byles and on 30 March, 1741, she with her husband, then of Boston, sold her interest in the ferry to Lawton. Later Lawton purchased other portions of the farm and, in his will, dated 9 July, 1752, he left all his real estate to his son Job. Job Lawton, 12 March, 1753, sold the ferry property to William Pearce of Bristol, yoeman, for £2,000 lawful money. The farm and the ferry remained in the Pearce family for a hundred years. It passed from William to his son George, and from him to his son William, who died 19 June, 1844, and left to his son George, 160 acres of the Ferry Farm with the buildings and improvements and wharf, and his part of the ferry and boats and the privileges and rights of the farm and ferry. On 30 November, 1859, George Pearce, for $13,000, sold to Capt. William H. West, of Bristol, the part of the Ferry Farm on the west side of the Ferry Road amounting to eighty-four acres, together with the ferry franchise, the ferry wharf, the ferry-boat, with its appurtenances, and everything connected with it on the north side of the ferry. The ferry house and lands still remain the property of the children of Capt. West. When Benjamin Church sold his right in the Ferry Farm, 16 October, 1685, it was described as containing 200 acres. Later the farm was more accurately surveyed by John Mumford and when sold by Nathaniel Blagrove to Samuel Little, in 1717, it was said to contain 224½ acres. It occupied the end of Ferry Neck, the northerly line running across the neck from east to west. The road to the ferry was laid out through the farm in 1690. As was stated in the account of ferry houses, the present house was built at three different periods. The oldest portion was certainly built before the Revolution and perhaps a good many years before. It is curious that the name of Byles is attached to a cupboard in the old house. Josiah Byles joined his wife in selling her right of dower in the place in 1741 and if the name of the cupboard dates back to his occupancy, and it would seem that it must, that part of the house must have been built before that time. We have not, however, found any evidence that Byles ever lived in the house, or was even a resident of Bristol, nevertheless it is not at all improbable that he was the ferry keeper, perhaps for Samuel Little, perhaps for his wife, who was Little's widow, and perhaps also for Thomas Lawton. It happens that we know nothing about who actually operated Bristol Ferry, whether the owners sailed the boats themselves, or hired ferryman for this purpose, except that this latter was what Capt. West, the last owner of the ferry, did. Capt. West was a sea captain, away a large part of the time, but, when the Civil War broke out, his business was destroyed and for a few years he sailed the ferry-boat a good part of the time.

The appearance of the Bristol side of this ferry in 1765 is shown in an illustration on earlier page. This ferry was different from most of the ferries in that its franchise did not depend upon legislative, or town action. By virtue of the Grand Deed and the Grand Articles of the proprietors of Bristol, the farm and ferry belonged in common to all the proprietors, and as the rights were gradually bought up and came into the hands of one individual, the farm and also the franchise became his private property, and could be freely deeded, or willed. Hence town and colony records make no reference to ferry owners, or ferrymen.

Bristol Ferry was one of the most important ferries in the colony as it afforded the most direct communication between Newport and Providence and Boston. References to crossing this ferry are made by Judge Sewall, Lord Belamont, Josiah Quincy, John Comer, Dr. MacSparran, Dr. Stiles, our French allies and General Washington. A stage route from the ferry to Boston was established in 1716. As we have seen, the ferry was interrupted for a short period during the Revolution, but after the war was over, travel was quickly resumed and in the early part of the nineteenth century travel was very heavy, if we can judge by the petitions which were presented to the general assembly by Bradford Hershey and others in 1833, and by the rates of ferriage, which provided for all kinds of wheel vehicles. Even stage coaches were ferried across on the horse boat. When the steamboat began to run from Fall River to Providence in 1827, stopping at the ferry place at Portsmouth and also at the village of Bristol, the ferry business was cut into and it fell off very much more after the railroad to Newport was opened in 1865. Soon after this Capt. West gave up the ferry and the old sailing ferry-boat went to decay. The lighthouse keeper for many years carried foot passengers across in a rowboat and there was a good deal of travel of this sort in the summer time, almost up to the end of the nineteenth century. The Misses West say that the Pearces' first ferry wharf was not far from where the lighthouse now is, but later, perhaps after the Revolution, a new wharf was built in front of the house where its extensive remains may now be seen.

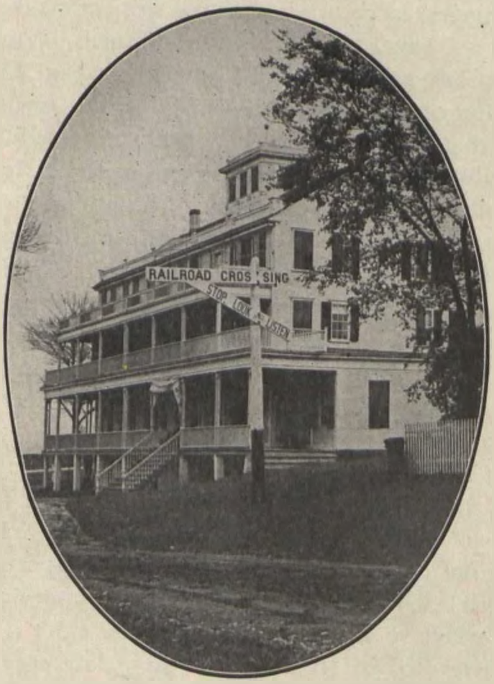
Sailing boats are not entirely satisfactory, as they are so often delayed by head winds and especially by calms. As we have seen, in the early part of the nineteenth century, ferry-boats began to be propelled by horse power and by steam. A horse boat was put on this ferry about 1825 to run between Portsmouth and Bristol and will be more fully considered in the account of that ferry. It is said that this boat continued to run until about 1845.

Portsmouth to Bristol

Tripp's Ferry

Generally ferries were named from their terminals. Thus in Providence the ferry at the site of Red Bridge was called Rehoboth, or Boston Ferry, but the ferry in the opposite direction was called Providence Ferry. The ferries from the Island of Rhode Island to Pocasset were the Pocasset Ferries. One would expect the ferry from Rhode Island to Bristol to be called Bristol Ferry, but this was not so. For a long period of years, these ferries were known by the names of their owners, Tripp's Ferry and Borden's Ferry. It was not until just before the Revolution that the term "Bristol Ferry" began to be applied to the ferries on both sides of the channel. Doubtless the reason that Tripp's Ferry was so called is because it was established long before Bristol was planted and the name persisted.

Among the earliest settlers near Bristol Ferry were Richard Borden, Ralph Earle and John Tripp. Richard Borden had land on the west side of what is now the main road and the other two were on the east side. There is recorded in the Portsmouth town records for 1651 an agreement between John Tripp and Ralph Earle about building a wall between their lands, Tripp's land being on the north, and Earle's on the south. According to the Earle genealogy, the agreement was



Bristol Ferry House, Portsmouth. The old house belonging to David Gifford was built into the upper part of the right hand corner. The wall at the end of the fence was originally built by Earle and Tripp in 1639.

in existence in 1888 and was dated 25 August 1639. The end of this wall, by the side of the fence, can be seen in the cut of the Bristol Ferry House. Although Tripp's land was to the north, it did not extend to the water, the shore land being then held in common by the town. It is likely that any of these three men may have had a boat in very early times and have carried travelers across when requested, although a regular ferry may not have, at first, been established. We know that John Tripp had a boat in 1658, for he was paid for carrying the members of the general assembly to the session held in Warwick that year. There is a persistent tradition in the Earle family that Ralph Earle was one of the early ferrymen, but the writer of the Earle Genealogy could find no documentary evidence. The fact that Ralph Earle was licensed to keep a house of entertainment in 1647, 1650 and 1654 fits in with this tradition, for the occupations of inn keeper and ferryman were often united. A note in the Newport Historical Magazine (Vol. IV p. 179) signed Chapman, reads "in 1669 Ralph Earle, of Portsmouth, kept the ferry at Bristol Ferry R. I. In 1720 Ralph Earle Jr. was granted a license to 'retail strong liquors' at his ferry house; over from Bristol Ferry.'" Then follows a quotation, evidently from the colonial records and reference to the ferry rates in 1669 and 1715. Diligent inquiry has not enabled us to learn where "Chapman" obtained this material about the Earles. It is not improbable that it may be correct so far as Ralph Earle the elder is concerned. Ralph Earle died in 1678 and the first reference to Tripp's Ferry was by Capt. Benjamin Church in 1676, but it must be remembered that Church wrote his account forty years after the events occurred, and it is not impossible that he may, in memory have projected the name Tripp backwards from a much later period. Earle may have had the ferry first and Tripp only undertaken it after Earle's death. It is more difficult to understand who the Ralph Earle, Jr. could have been, for Ralph the son of Ralph, died in 1717 and his nephew Ralph, the son of William, moved to Massachusetts in 1716 and Ralph^3 Ralph^2 Ralph^1 lived in Dartmouth.

The first definite reference we have found to this ferry is by Benjamin Church. The exact date is not given, but it was the last of August, 1676. Church was spending the night at Sanford's, further down on the island, when word was brought to him that an Indian on "sandpoint over against Trips," called to be carried over and that he had been brought over to the Rhode Island side. The editor says that sandpoint was about where Bristol Ferry lighthouse now stands. Church and his party lost no time and "they were soon at Trips Ferry where the deserter was." As we shall later see, when, a few days after this, Church wished to make use of the ferry to take his men over to attack the Indians, the boat was out of the way as too often happened in emergencies.

John Tripp died 6 December, 1677, and by his will he gave to his son Abiel, the south end of his house with a lot adjoining and other land. In his inventory 18 October, 1678, is mentioned a great boat with appurtenances, £40, and a smaller boat, £22. The widow, Mary Tripp, was granted a license, twenty third day, fourth month, 1679, to sell victuals and drink to travelers and afford them entertainment. In an account of Bristol Ferry prepared by a committee of the town in 1727, it is stated that Abiel Tripp built a wharf on the public landing place at Bristol Ferry in 1680. According to the comtemporary town records, Abiel Tripp, 19 December, 1682, was given liberty to finish his wharf. Abiel Tripp died 9 September, 1684, leaving a wife, Deliverance, and a son, Abiel, about three months old. In his inventory, 10 September, 1684, is mentioned a ferry-boat and cloth for sail, £15. Thomas Durfee married Deliverance, the widow of Abiel Tripp, and, 2 August, 1698, he and his wife petitioned the general assembly for an act confirming the ferry between Rhode Island and Bristol upon the heir of Abiel Tripp until he should become of age, which would be in about seven years. We do not know what became of the ferry during the years between 1684 and 1698. Very likely it was operated by the widow. Neither do we know who actually ran the ferry while it was stated upon

Thomas Durfee. Durfee's home was at what is now known as "The Hummocks," a little south of the railroad bridge, and there is no reason to think that he ever moved to Bristol Ferry. It is not likely that young Abiel was allowed to operate the ferry, though we know of other boys of his age who managed ferry-boats. It is more likely that the Durfees hired someone to operate the ferry for them. On 19 June, 1705, when Abiel Tripp had just become of age, the ferry was granted to him for a period of seven years. Probably Abiel Tripp continued to operate the ferry, for a number of years, though in a deed of land on Hog Island, purchased of John Sanford, he is called "Abiel Tripp, ferryman, now resident of Bristol." This was in 1717. Perhaps at this time he was employed by the owners of the Bristol side of the ferry to operate that, as well as his own side, and for some reason found it convenient to live in Bristol for a while. In a deed to John Earle, dated 21 May, 1722, Abiel Tripp now calls himself ferryman of Portsmouth. A plat of this portion of the island, made in May, 1719, is on file in the office of the town clerk of Portsmouth. It shows the ferry wharf, the land adjoining reserved by the town for a common landing place, and what is probably the house of Abiel Tripp and that of John Borden. In October, 1724, Abiel Tripp, ferryman, petitioned the general assembly for an increase in rates of ferriage, which was granted.

As we shall see, another ferry had been established by John Borden only a short distance from Tripp's Ferry and, in 1727, an effort was apparently made by Borden's son Thomas, to prevent Abiel Tripp from continuing his ferry. As was called to our attention by George R. Hicks, this was seriously objected to by the inhabitants of the town, who petitioned the general assembly that the ferry privilege ought not to be confined to Thomas Borden, or to any one particular person, as it is not so convenient, and cannot accommodate the public, as if continued in two distinct places as the same has been accustomed to have been kept of old. Abiel Tripp also objected to the ferry being moved from his house, or his place where he lives, where there is a public landing place, and from whence there hath been a ferry kept for upwards of forty years. Whereupon a franchise was granted to both Borden and Tripp. The town also appointed a committee, 27 March 1727, to determine whether the general assembly had the right to lease the town ferries. This committee found that the general assembly had continued this practice so long that the town's rights had probably been lost. This report contains a good deal of interesting information concerning the acts of the general assembly in regard to ferries. In May of the following year, probably as a result of this controversy, the general court of Massachusetts forbade the erection of another ferry within one half mile on either side of Bristol Ferry, which, of course, was then in the colony of Massachusetts.

Tripp's Ferry and Borden's Ferry are both mentioned in the acts fixing the rates of ferriage passed in 1743 and 1747, but not in 1750 and 1752. It is therefore possible that Abiel Tripp had given up operating his ferry. His will, dated 10 January, 1752, leaves to his son Thomas, his wharf adjoining the ferry, but makes no mention of the ferry privilege, or of a ferry-boat. Thomas Tripp, 19 April, 1766, sold to Joseph Borden seven acres on the east side of the road and "my wharf that adjoineth to said highway and runneth into the river before my door which was given me by my honored father Abiel Tripp." It is probable that this ferry was not operated from about 1750 until this sale of the old ferry property to Joseph Borden. At least we have found no reference to it. A few years later, in February, 1769, Joseph Borden applied for a license, alleging that it seems to be the general opinion that another ferry-boat to pass over Bristol Ferry would be very expedient for the accommodation of travellers and, as Newport, the metropolis of the colony, is situated on Rhode Island, he conceives that any lawful attempt to facilitate conveyance to and from said place would meet with due consideration from the general assembly. He desired that he might set up a ferry from a place called Tripp's Ferry in Portsmouth (about seventy or eighty rods, more or less, eastward from the present ferry) and from thence across to Pearce's wharf, or pier, where said Tripp's Ferry was formerly kept, he, the petitioner, having a licensed house close to said Ferry Place to which there is a direct and easy road: and expecting in case this petition be granted to have everything required by law etc. In the manuscript acts and resolves of that session it is stated that the petition was granted, but according to the printed acts and resolves for May, because of John Borden's vigorous objection, the matter was referred to the next session and Joseph Borden was summoned to be present and meanwhile was prohibited from carrying persons from his ferry place. In June the subject was again referred to the next session and it was ordered that "all proceedings be stayed." It is not clear what this means and no further action is recorded. Nevertheless, the franchise must have been granted, for 12 December, 1774, Joseph Borden sold to David Gifford of Portsmouth, land with dwelling, bounded north on the road and common and also his ferry wharf and ferry-boat and her belongings and the ferry privilege. The will of David Gifford, referred to below, states that he purchased this property when Joseph Borden became of age.

It is probable that both John Borden's and Gifford's ferries were operated until the island was occupied by the British, but we have no knowledge that Borden's Ferry was re-established after the war. We read in Stile's Diary, 4 September, 1775, that the Doctor crossed Bristol Ferry on his way to the army and that in November he made another trip across the ferry. John Howland of Providence, in 1776, while in his way to Newport, crossed Bristol Ferry and lodged at the ferry house on the Rhode Island side. The dilapidated condition in which the ferry was found by the French in 1780 is referred to in the section on the Ferries in Wartime. After 1756 we have not found any reference to either Borden's or Tripp's Ferry by name, which would suggest that after that date, except perhaps for a short time, there was only one ferry between Portsmouth and Bristol, which was hereafter known as Bristol Ferry, a name which has since been applied to the ferries running in either direction at this point. Although Gifford's name was not officially connected with the ferry, according to West's almanac for 1784, 1785 and 1787, he kept the ferry house at Bristol Ferry.

The will of David Gifford, dated seventh day second month, 1789, and probated 21 June, 1790, gave to his son, Gideon, one half of the ferry place, land, ferry house, boat and wharf purchased of Joseph Borden and to his son, Jeremiah, the other half of the ferry.

The ferry committee, at about the close of the eighteenth century, became very active and, in its reports to the general assembly, found much fault with the condition and management of the ferries. In October, 1798, it was reported that at the ferry on the Portsmouth side, owned by the Messrs. Gifford, the wharf remained the same as it had been, so that it was difficult to pass at low water with a loaded boat. Evidently the Giffords continued their neglect and an action was instituted against them, for, in February, 1799, Gideon Gifford explained to the legislature that he had the material and that, as soon as the weather became warm enough, he would extend the wharf to deep water. The case was then continued until the November term of the court. Nevertheless, in June of that year, the committee reported that the wharf was no better. In October, 1800, it was said that the wharf needed another plate.

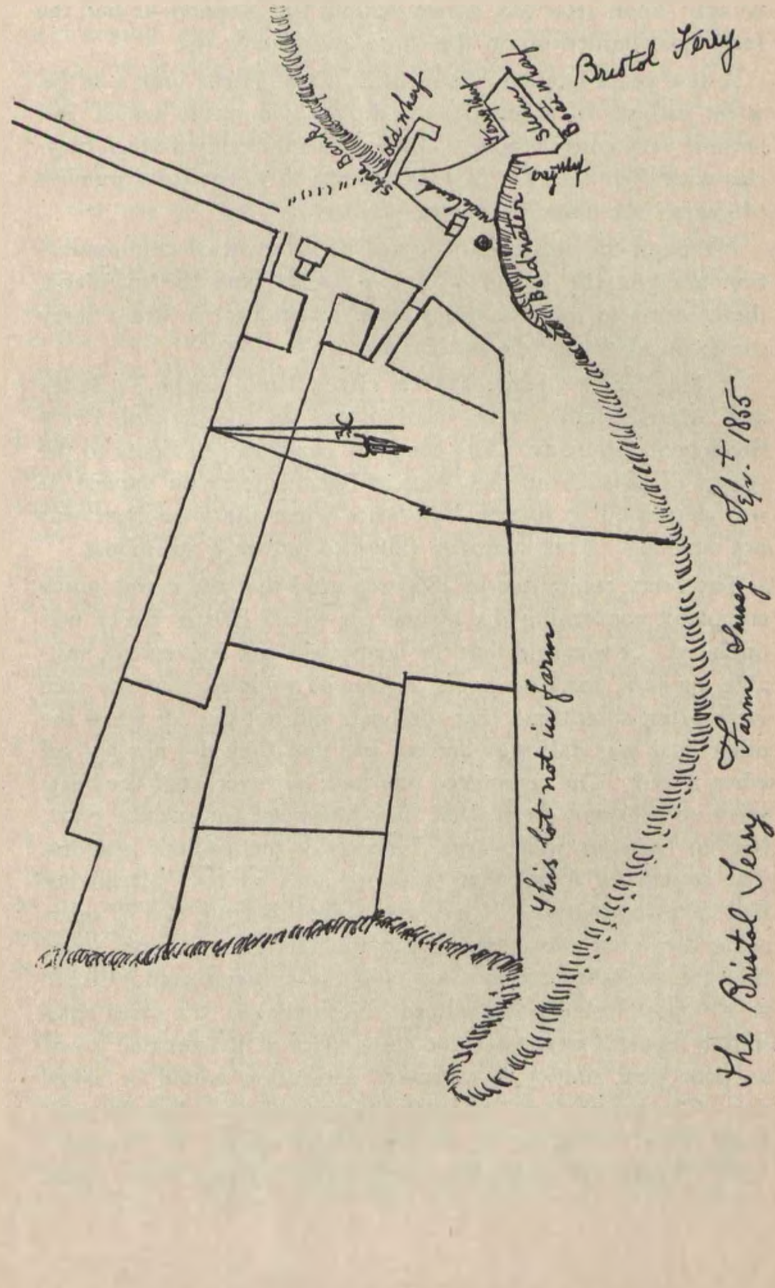
About this time Gideon and Jeremiah Gifford began to purchase land in the vicinity of the ferry, forming what was afterwards known as the Ferry Farm. Included in this was the Coddington farm of ninety-three acres and twenty-five acres just east of the ferry, and a stable on the landing place. Thus the abutters had begun to encroach on the land set apart for a public landing.

The patrons and the owners of the ferries began to desire something more reliable than sail power. Horse power and steam were being used in other parts of the country and, in January, 1824, a petition was presented to the general assembly for a charter for a company to operate boats by these more modern methods. The Rhode Island Steam and Team Boat Company was chartered, composed of Stephen T. Northam, Charles Cotton, Christopher Fowler and Edward Brinley. The capital stock was $15,000. It was permitted to operate a ferry near that of Jeremiah Gifford and William Pearce, from a point to the eastward of the ferry landing, then in possession of Jeremiah Gifford, in a direct line from the main road on the island to the public road leading to Bristol, to the eastward of Pearce's wharf. The company was given a monopoly for one mile on each side. A horse boat was built at the ferry by Ephraim, Gideon, and Jeremiah Gifford and George Childs who had a ship building partnership. The boat was put into commission on 6 June, 1826. For a time, at least, the man in charge of this boat was George Lloyd of Newport. We do not know whether the company was ever organized, but we do know that in 1833 the horse boat belonged to the Giffords, doubtless in partnership with William Pearce. At that time, June 1833, a petition was presented to the general assembly representing that the rates of ferriage on this ferry were excessive. In October a counter petition was presented in which it was alleged that the traffic on the ferry had decreased for thirty years. This was partly due to the construction of Stone Bridge, but especially to the fact that the steamboats from Fall River to Providence and from Newport to Providence stopped at the ferry. The steamboat *Hancock,* owned by the Fall River Iron Works Co. began to run from Fall River to Providence in 1827 and the *King Philip* was put on in March, 1833. In their petition, Pearce and the Giffords stated that the horse boat was expensive to operate and was unreliable in heavy weather. The boat had sunk at the wharf in February, 1830. It was necessary to maintain sail-boats and rowboats as well as the horse boat. In October, 1830, it was complained that the horse boat was too often set aside for the sail boat. It is said that the horse boat was operated until about 1845 when the new and large steamer Bradford Durfee was put on the Fall River route.

Jeremiah Gifford, by his will, dated 9 April, 1834, left to his son, William H., half the ferry privilege. Before Jeremiah died, his brother Gideon, who owned the other half share of the ferry, had died intestate. Among the items in the inventory of his estate, 14 April, 1830, were the following; one quarter of the horse boat $100, one half of the ferry-boat $75 and one half of two horses in the horse boat $40. That the horse boat, costing some $1800 in 1826, should be worth only $400 in 1830 indicates remarkable depreciation, but it had recently been sunk at the wharf, which would perhaps account for it. Gideon Gifford left one daughter, Mary Ann, who married John Cross. On 25 March, 1840, Gideon's daughter, Mary Ann Cross, quitclaimed to Jeremiah Gifford all her interest in the ferry. Jeremiah Gifford thus became possessed of three quarters of the ferry and by a codicil to his will, dated 6 November, 1841, he gave this three quarter share to his son, William H. Jeremiah Gifford's will was probated 20 January, 1842. On 11 August, 1842, William H. Gifford and wife Thankful, for $10,000 sold to Jesse Chace, of Newport, fifty six acres late the property of Jeremiah Gifford with three quarters of the Bristol Ferry wharves and sail-boats and three quarters of one half of the horse boat. It would thus appear that the Giffords owned one half of the horse boat, the other half doubtless being owned by the Pearces, who were the proprietors of the Bristol side of the ferry. It also indicates that the horse boat was still valuable property and this agrees with the statement of Bayles that it was in operation until 1845. It is probable, however, that this was not the original boat, for newspaper advertisements of the stage line to Providence in 1840, refer to the new horse boat. On 26 September, 1842, Hannah Gifford, widow of Jeremiah, gave to Capt. Chace a quitclaim deed of her rooms in the ferry house. Captain Chace completed his purchase by acquiring, 28 March, 1850, from Samuel James Dennis of New Hampshire, one quarter of Bristol Ferry with boats, wharves and franchise, which came to

Gideon G. Dennis and Samuel James Dennis who were the grandsons of Gideon Gifford.

On 9 October, 1855, Jesse Chace and wife, of Newport, sold the Bristol Ferry farm in Portsmouth with wharves and boats to Henry Bull, Job A. Peckham, and Joseph T. Bailey of Newport. A plat of the farm and ferry place at this time is here shown. It is from a copy filed with the papers relating to the lawsuit to be referred to later. On 8 June, 1858, Job A. Peckham sold his share in the ferry estate to Alfred Smith of Newport. It is probable that the hotel and also the large stone wharf, now existing, were built by Capt. Chace, for they both appear on Isaac Cory's plat of 1855. In July, 1858, the above named owners of the ferry granted to the Fall River Iron Works Company the privilege of landing steamboats at Bristol Ferry wharf for twenty-three years. The lessors were to erect a freight building with a room for passengers. The rent was to be $350 per year. This company formed a subsidiary corporation, The Fall River and Providence Steamboat Co., in 1880, which continued to operate its boats until 1895, when its property was acquired by the Providence, Fall River and Newport Steamboat Company. Their boats continued to stop at the ferry for many years. For a time the owners of the ferry employed Capt. Vars of Newport to run the hotel. Capt. Oliver G. Hicks says John Ingraham was ferryman after Chace sold the property and lived in the rear part of the hotel. He taught young Hicks how to sail, so that he was able to handle the boat by himself when he was thirteen years old. Soon after that he took the management of the ferry. He is remembered at that time as a big, ruddy, strong boy. The big sailing boat was operated all through the war and for some years afterwards, until Alfred Sisson bought the property, 28 August, 1871. After Capt. Vars, the hotel had been closed for some time until it was purchased by Mr. Sisson. The ferry and store on the wharf were still kept by Mr. Baylis. It is said that one reason for giving up the ferry was the difficulty of getting reliable boatmen, as liquor was sold on the


Bristol Ferry
Stone Bank
old wharf
Horse wharf
Steam wharf
Boat wharf
Headland
Bold water
This lot not in farm

The Bristol Ferry Farm Survey Sept. 1855

Plat of Bristol Ferry Farm, Portsmouth.

wharf. Soon after Mr. Sisson bought the property he had the ferry-boat hauled up on the shore and broken up.

A few years later, in the eighties, Capt. Hicks built a large, wide, catboat to accommodate the bicycle traffic which had become very considerable. The boat would carry sixteen bicycles with their riders. Capt. Hicks ran this boat for a number of years. At times a rowboat was used.

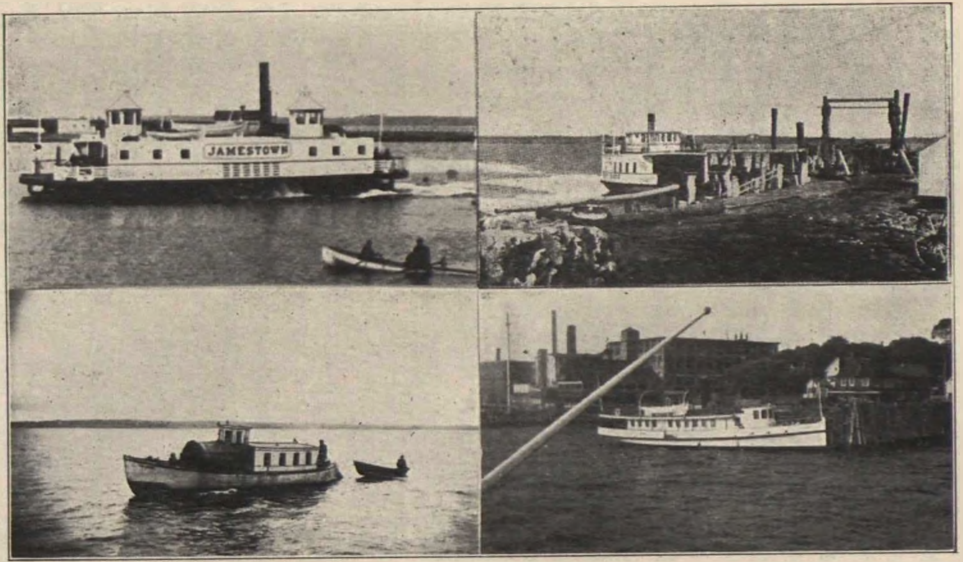
Although the steamboats served as a means of communication between the Island of Rhode Island and the mainland, there seems to have been a strong demand for a steam ferry connecting Portsmouth and Bristol.

In May, 1859, George Pearce, Henry Bull, Joseph T. Bailey and Alfred Smith were incorporated as the Bristol Ferry Steamboat Company. The company could run its boats to the village of Bristol, but must stop at Bristol Ferry on request. It was permitted to operate sail-boats when the steamboat was not working. This company failed to put on a steamboat.

The ferry committee in 1860 reported that there was much complaint concerning the manner in which Bristol Ferry was operated. It was said that the boats were not convenient, suitable, or safe, for passengers, horses or vehicles, that the men were often absent and that the boats did not put off when the other boat was half way across, and that they did not put off when asked. The committee reported, however, that the boats were no different from what they had been for twenty years, but the vehicles were larger, especially the pedlers' wagons. The committee found that the complaints of poor attendance had little foundation. It was also stated that the cost of operating the ferry was greater than the receipts. It was hoped that the proposed steam ferry and the contemplated railroad to Newport would help matters. Nevertheless, the same committee reported next year that the service at Bristol Ferry was so poor that, unless it improved, legislation would be asked for. The steam ferry was not then established, but the railroad from Fall River to Newport was opened in February 1864. There still continued a belief that a steam ferry would be profitable and in 1865 a charter was granted to the Pokanoket and Rhode Island Ferry Company to operate a ferry from some point in Portsmouth, near the old ferry wharf, or near the coal mine, to the south end of the town of Bristol, or to the village of Bristol. This company also did nothing.

After the old ferry had been abandoned for nearly thirty years, a new project was developed for an electric railway from Newport to Bristol Ferry, with a steam ferry to connect with the New Haven Railroad in Bristol. In 1902 the charter of the Newport and Bristol Ferry Railroad Company was granted to Melville Bull and others to operate a railroad in Newport, Middletown and Portsmouth and to operate a ferry between Portsmouth and Bristol. A wharf was built in Portsmouth a little distance west of the old ferry wharf and almost touching the remains of the west pier of the ancient Borden Ferry. The wharf in Bristol is just south of Constitution Street. The ferry was opened 15 June 1905. The first boat was the Sagamore. Later the Bristol was purchased. She is used only in the summer time when there is a demand for automobile traffic. In 1911 the name of the company was changed to the Newport and Providence Railway Company and it was authorized to build an electric road from Bristol to Warren and to sell light and power, but this was not done.

The location of all the old ferry wharves is of interest, but the location of this ferry in Portsmouth is especially interesting, as it was the cause of so much discussion and litigation by the inhabitants of the town. The first record found is a plat on file in Portsmouth. This is the original copy and is based on a survey made 21 May, 1714, by John Mumford and is called plat No. 9, of a series of plats showing the distribution which was made at that time of all the common lands. This plat shows Abiel Tripp's house and the house of John Earle just south of it and the ferry wharf opposite Tripp's house. It also shows the line of the common at the landing place about which litigation centered, but these lines apparently were drawn on the plat at a much later period. In 1727 Abiel

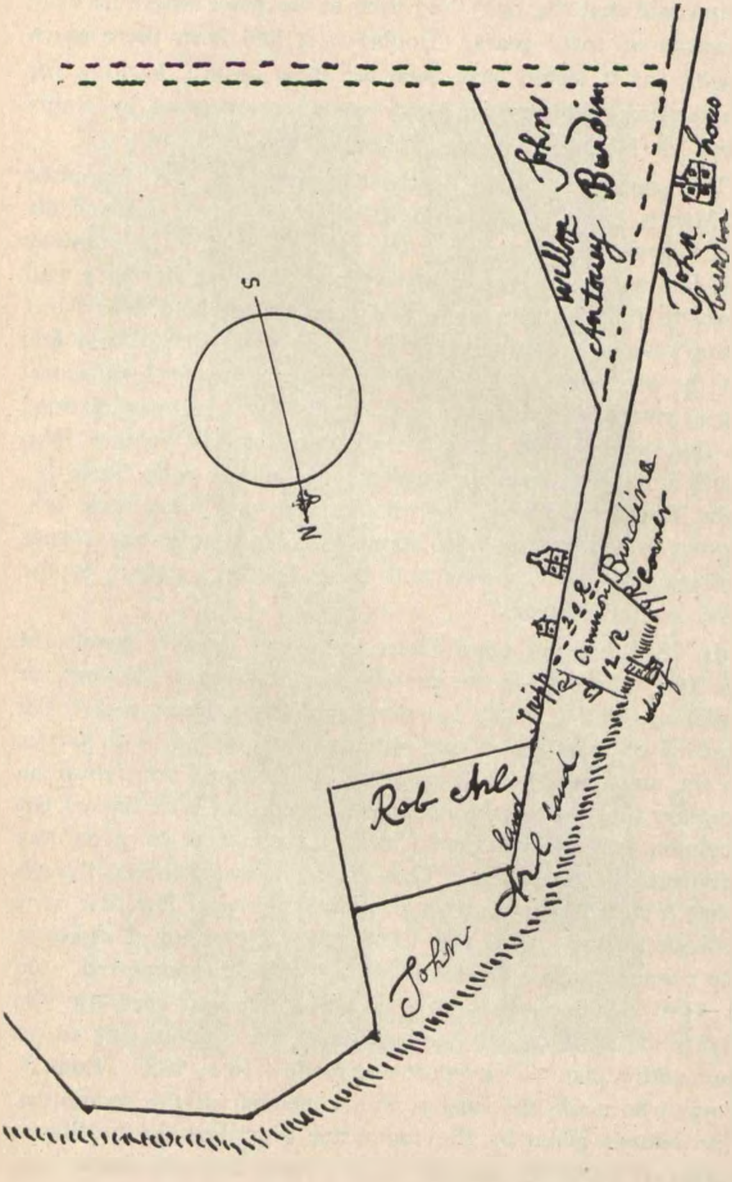


Upper left—First steam ferry-boat, Jamestown to Newport. Upper right—*West Side*, Saunderstown to Jamestown. Lower left—*Reliance*, Prudence to Bristol. Lower right—*Sagamore*, Bristol Ferry.

Tripp said that the ferry had been at the place where he lived upwards of forty years. Doubtless it had been there much longer, for it would have been the most natural location for the landing, whether the ferry was first operated by Ralph Earle, or John Tripp, grandfather of this Abiel.

The committee to divide the common land was appointed 12 March, 1713-14, and made its report 3 June, 1717, and the report was then approved by the town meeting. The highway was laid out to the northeast corner of Thomas Borden's wall opposite John Earle's house and the piece of land near Abiel Tripp's house, "adjoining to the ferry against Bristol, was left for the conveniency of the public in importing and transporting of cattle, sheep, horses, wood, rails, etc., and was bounded on the bank against the salt water twelve rods, against John Earle and John Earle, Jr. twelve rods, against John Earle Jr., John Tripp and Abiel Tripp, that is from said John Earle Jr's. corner, southwesterly to Thomas Borden's northeast corner aforesaid, is twenty rods and from Borden's corner to the bank is nineteen rods."

In 1843 Captain Jesse Chace, who had recently purchased the ferry, asked for the privilege of erecting a building, or buildings, on the town's common near Bristol Ferry wharf. On April 5 of that year a committee was appointed, with power to act, and August 29, it reported that it could not determine whether the wall on the northeast was on the true line of the common. If it was, then Chace ought not to be given the privilege he asked for. This report was approved, though what it signifies to approve an indefinite report like that, it is difficult to see. After this Chace evidently assumed rights in the common which the town did not think he possessed. On 4 April, 1855, a committee was appointed to ascertain the rights of the town and the bounds of the common and to report with a plat. This report was made 4 June, 1855. Isaac S. Cory, who made the survey, was a member of the committee. The bounds given by the committee described the northwest corner as formerly the edge of the bank, but now made land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Plat of Bristol Ferry Common, Portsmouth, from a survey made in 1714. Original on file in Portsmouth.

and a portion of the wharf. Thence the line extended southwest twelve rods across the wharf, or made land, to a point nineteen rods from Thomas Borden's corner at low water, being six rods below the edge of the bank at this time, leaving the south side of the common thirteen rods instead of nineteen rods. The committee reported that it had conferred with Capt. Jesse Chace and he said that the citizens had no right in his wharf, but he was willing to arbitrate. On 30 June, 1855, the town agreed to defend anyone who refused to pay wharfage. On 4 November, 1856, the town appointed a committee to confer with Bailey and Bull who had purchased the ferry in 1855, concerning a survey of the common and, if the surveyors cannot agree, to choose a referee whose decision should be final. The referees, thus appointed, made their report 1 April, 1857, and stated that a survey had been made and bounds set. It was voted by the town not to accept the report because it cut down the east bound of the common from twenty to thirteen and three tenths rods and the south bound from nineteen to eleven rods. At a request from the owners of the ferry, this report and layout were entered upon the records.

A few months later, in the autumn of 1857, the owners of the ferry built a fence eight rods long on the western part of the common obstructing the passage to the shore and the old ferry wharf. The town instituted legal proceedings and the owners of the ferry were indicted in 1858 for obstructing the common. After a lengthy trial and many delays, the case went to the supreme court in March 1868 when a new trial was granted. According to the report of a committee of the town, made 11 October, 1875, the defendants were found guilty, thus re-establishing the layout of 1713. The committee set stone bounds which may now readily be seen.

This case was known as The State vs. Job A. Peckham et al. There are in the office of the clerk of the supreme court in Newport a large number of papers, consisting of deeds, wills, and extracts from town and colonial records, relating to the history of the ferry for 150 years. The plat of 1719 shows the old ferry wharf on the shore of the common, opposite Tripp's house, where it was built in 1680. The plat of the Ferry Farm made in 1855, shows the "old wharf" in the same location, although its form had been somewhat altered. Its remains are now laid bare at low water.

Isaac Cory's plat of 1855, as well as that of the Ferry Farm, show the present steamboat wharf. On both plats the long front of the wharf facing the channel is called the steamboat wharf, while the two shore ends of the wharf are called respectively the north ferry wharf and the south ferry wharf. It would appear from this, that, so soon as this wharf was built, the ferry-boats began to make their landings there and abandoned the old wharf where the water must have become very shoal. Judge Baker, acting as referee, in a boundary dispute, 29 October, 1887, refers to this north ferry wharf, though the regular ferry-boats were not running as late as that. Capt. Hicks says that one of the old wharves now seen only at low water, has always been called the horse boat wharf.

Portsmouth to Bristol

Borden's Ferry

At the same time that Tripp's Ferry was granted to Thomas Durfee during the minority of Abiel, namely, 2 August, 1698, John Borden was also permitted to keep said ferry in equal privilege with said Durfee. This is the first time that Borden's Ferry is mentioned and this is probably the first license that was granted for it. That a second ferry was established thus early in this location indicates that there must have been considerable traffic. The location of these ferries has been considered in connection with Tripp's Ferry. On 19 June, 1705, the ferry licenses of John Borden and of Abiel Tripp, who had now become of age, were renewed for a period of seven years. In Sewall's diary, 16 September, 1711, we read that "From the Ferry sail'd in Burden's Boat to Bristol". John Borden died 4 June 1716 and, by his will, dated February, 24, of that year, he left to his son Thomas, all his housing and land in Portsmouth. In October, 1724, the rates of ferriage were fixed for the two ferries operated by Abiel Tripp and Thomas Borden respectively. It appears that in 1727 Thomas Borden tried to secure an exclusive franchise, but, as was shown, when discussing Tripp's Ferry, he was unsuccessful and both ferries were continued. Both ferries were mentioned in the acts fixing the ferry rates in 1743 and 1747, but only Borden's Ferry is mentioned in the acts of 1750, 1752 and 1756. The will of Thomas Borden, dated 27 September, 1745, and probated 14 October of that year, left to his son John, his dwelling house, outhouses and lands and his ferry-boat and rights in the ferry and to his wife Mary, the profits of his real estate. On 9 September, 1747, a lease was granted to Mary Borden, widow, for three years of the ferry from her wharf in Portsmouth to Bristol. As was shown above, legislative reference was made to Borden's Ferry in 1750, 1752 and 1756. On October 25, 1751, MacSparren writes of going to Borden's Ferry and lodging at Borden's. We have no certain knowledge as to who operated the ferry during these years, but it was probably John Borden, son of Thomas, as is indicated by the following. It seems that Thomas Tripp deeded to Joseph Borden, 19 April, 1766, about seven acres bounded northwest on the highway, northeast on Edward Perry and Oliver Earle and east and south on Oliver Earle, together with "my wharf that adjoineth to said highway and runneth into the river before my door which was given me by my Hon. father Abiel Tripp". This was the original Tripp Ferry property, which had probably not been used as a ferry for some years and which thus came into the hands of one of the Bordens. About three years later, this Joseph Borden, as has been shown in the section on Tripp's Ferry, sought to re-establish the ferry at that point, which he said was seventy or eighty rods east from the present ferry. This seems to locate the then existing ferry on the land which originally belonged to John Borden and was left by him in 1716 to his son, Thomas, and by the later in 1745 to his son, John. There can now be seen at low water about fifty feet east of the present steam ferry landing, the remains of an old pier which is probably that of John Borden, though it is not quite so far to the west as stated by him, but "seventy or eighty" rods is not a very accurate statement of distance. The remains of a second pier can be seen built into the present ferry wharf. The space between was probably the old ferry slip. The plat of 1719 shows John Borden's house standing close to the road in the upper part of the triangular lot as it now lies, and it can be readily seen that this would have been as convenient a place for the ferry as any. John Borden vigorously protested against this setting up of another ferry by Joseph. The matter was under consideration by the general assembly at several sessions and it is not clear, from the records, what action was taken, but presumably the license was finally granted to Joseph, for he sold the real estate, boat, and ferry privilege in 1774. No further reference to John Borden's Ferry has been found, but it is probable that it was operated up to the period of the Revolution. At any rate, according to Anderson's almanacs, John Borden kept the ferry house at Bristol Ferry, on the Portsmouth side, in 1772, 1773 and 1774.

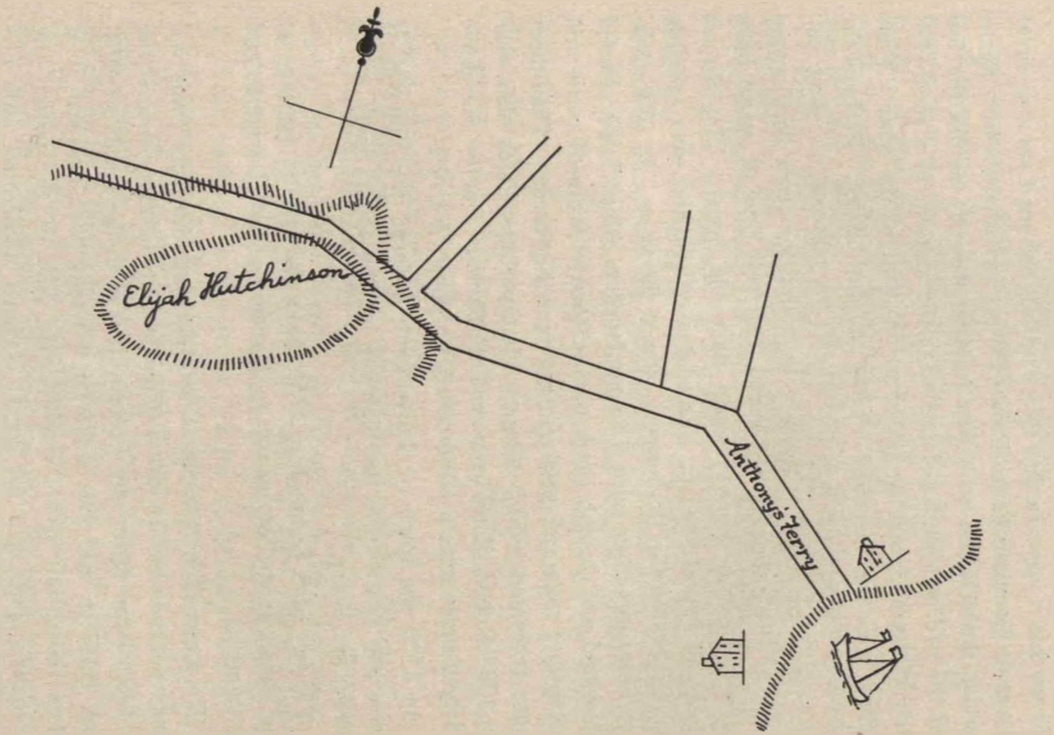
Portsmouth to Tiverton

Durfee's Ferry

In deeds and in the layout of highways this was often referred to as Anthony's Ferry, though generally the ferry in the opposite direction, from Tiverton to Portsmouth, was also called Anthony's Ferry. It was also called Pocasset Ferry. As the region later incorporated as Tiverton was earlier known by its Indian name of Pocasset, Rhode Island people naturally applied the name Pocasset both to this ferry and to the one where Stone Bridge now is. Durfee's Ferry extended from what was known as "The Common Fence", now called the Hummocks, to a point in Tiverton now called Humphrey's Wharf, a little distance below the railroad bridge.

The first reference to this ferry is 21 April, 1681, when the proprietors agreed that the land from Sinning Flesh River to Durfee's Ferry be laid out into twenty house lots. It would appear from this that Durfee's Ferry was well known and that it had probably been in operation for some time, but when it was established we have not been able to learn. The first reference to Thomas Durfee, who was probably the proprietor of the ferry, is his admission as an inhabitant of Portsmouth 12 May, 1662. On 10 March, 1672-3, Durfee had eight acres laid out to him in the Common Fence. In 1679 Durfee was licensed to keep a house of entertainment. At the same time the widow Tripp, then the proprietor of Bristol Ferry, whom Durfee afterwards married, was also granted a license. They were forbidden to charge more than two pence a gill for rum. A ferry had previously been established where is now Stone Bridge and, 7 June, 1677, Plymouth Colony Court took vigorous action to prevent competition. It is quite likely that Durfee's Ferry had recently been established and was cutting into the business of the older ferry. As Durfee doubtless lived on Rhode Island, Plymouth Colony would have no sympathy with his enterprise.

In the layout of the Pocasset lands, above referred to, the ferry lot, the ministry lot and the highway were laid out "over against Durfee's" or "Durfees ferry house", but the word ferry has been crossed out in this entry. Nevertheless there can be little doubt that Durfee's Ferry was in operation at this time. In the layout of the main road from Taunton to Little Compton, 8 May, 1688, reference is made to its crossing the highway laid out by the proprietors to Durfee's Ferry. Thomas Durfee, 30 January, 1688-9, sold to his son Thomas his dwelling house and eight acres of land belonging to it, situated in the Common Fence near Pocasset River. The fact that this was called Durfee's Ferry in deeds in 1690 and 1692 suggests that Thomas Durfee, Jr. continued to operate his father's ferry, though it is possible that the name may have lingered, though another controlled the ferry. In 1694 and 1699 the ferry is referred to as that formerly called Durfee's Ferry. The next reference we find to this as Durfee's Ferry is in 1743 when it is designated in the act of the general assembly of Rhode Island fixing rates of ferriage, as Durfee's Ferry, now in possession of William Wall, Jr. of Portsmouth. From all the above it is probable that this ferry was operated by the Durfee's from the time of King Philip's War, or perhaps before, up to 1692 and at about that time it fell into other hands. It may be that some Durfee again controlled it towards the middle of the next century, but it is quite as probable that the use of the term, Durfees Ferry, in 1743, was merely a tradition. In the meantime the people of Portsmouth at times referred to it as Anthony's Ferry. The Anthonys during this period operated a ferry in the opposite direction and it may be that they had a ferry house in Portsmouth and ran a mate boat from that side, of which, however, we have found no evidence. We have found no reference to this ferry after 1752, though the opposite ferry was operated up to, or after the Revolution. From deeds and layouts we learn that both Thomas Durfee and Joseph Anthony had land in the Common Fence, on, or near, Pocasset River, as it was then called. On nineteenth day, twelfth month, 1682, Joseph Anthony was given liberty to build a wharf against the house in which he then dwelt. In the latter part of the seventeenth century the Anthonys moved to the east side of the "river" but for some time retained their real estate in Portsmouth, the house upon it being designated as Anthony's house, or Anthony's old house. On 5 June, 1717, Joseph and Mary Anthony of Tiverton sold to Robert Estes of Portsmouth fifteen acres, with dwelling, in the Common Fence, near Pocasset Ferry, bounded south on land of Thomas Durfee, east on the beach and north on the road to the ferry. The location of the ferry is quite accurately determined by the layout of a highway and the accompanying plat. As was referred to in the history of Bristol Ferry, the town of Portsmouth, in 1713 appointed a committee to relay the highways and divide the commons. This committee made its report 25 June, 1717. This report contained the layout of a highway in the Common Fence to Anthony's Ferry. As at Bristol Ferry, so here, the beach below the bank was to remain


Elijah Hutchinson
Anthony's Ferry

Plat of road to Anthony's Ferry, Portsmouth, probably surveyed in 1714. Original on file in Portsmouth.

open to the highway for use as a public landing place. The plat accompanying the report of the committee is here shown. From this it appears that this road left the road running north towards Common Fence Point just beyond where it now passes under the railroad and then running easterly across the line of the railroad made a bend, near the station, in a southeasterly direction, reaching the shore in front of the quarry from which rock was removed for the railroad bridge. Perhaps the old wharf was built into the wharf, the remains of which can now there be seen. It seems certain that the ferry was located here in 1717, though in Thomas Durfee's time, it might have been somewhat further south near his house. The Robert Estes above referred to was a ship-wright and may possibly have operated the Portsmouth side of the ferry. In 1726 Robert Estes, together with Thomas Borden, Abiel Tripp, Daniel Howland and Joseph Cook were chosen viewers of cattle and sheep that came to be transported over the ferries. The others were ferrymen, which suggests that perhaps Estes also was. In 1736 Robert Estes conveyed to Thomas Durfee the above "fifteen acres near a place called Anthony's Ferry".

In 1750 the town of Portsmouth ordered the removal of gates and posts from the highway leading to the ferry called Anthony's Ferry.

The act of 8 September, 1756, fixes the rate of ferriage at the ferries from Portsmouth to Tiverton called Howland's and Anthony's.

The proceeding references indicate that this ferry was for many years in the hands of Thomas Durfee, that towards the middle of the eighteenth century it was in the hands of William Hall, Jr. and that Robert Estes may have operated it at other times, but for a considerable part of the period the Anthonys conducted the ferry, perhaps, sometimes only one boat being in use and that from the Tiverton side.

TIVERTON TO PORTSMOUTH

ANTHONY'S FERRY

This was the ferry from what is now Humphrey's wharf in Tiverton to the old wharf in front of the quarry at the Hummocks in the "Common Fence" in Portsmouth. In the layout of the Pocasset lands in 1681 it was also called the northernmost ferry to distinguish it from the ferry at the location of Stone Bridge. When this ferry was established we do not know. John Anthony was one of the early settlers of Portsmouth. His son Joseph owned land in the Common Fence where he made his home. His possible interest in the ferry from Portsmouth to Tiverton has been discussed under Durfee's Ferry. It is not likely that Anthony's Ferry, the one now under consideration, was established until Joseph Anthony moved to the Pocasset side, which was then in Plymouth Colony. In a deed, 16 March, 1691-2, he is called of Portsmouth. He was, however, called an inhabitant of Tiverton at the organization of that town, 2 March 1692, and thereafter he was described as of Pocasset, or Tiverton. It appears therefore that he moved to Pocasset early in 1692. At that time his son Joseph was about ten years old.

About all that we know concerning the early history of the ferry is contained in three written statements now in the possession of Benjamin Barker of New York and Tiverton, a descendant of Joseph Anthony. One of these papers, dated Portsmouth sixth day, third month, 1745, was a letter from William Anthony to Governor Shirley of Massachusetts. It is as follows: "I am requested by my Kinsman Joseph Anthony of Tiverton to inform of what I know of A ferry being constantly Kept from his dwelling house, over to portsmouth to my Certain Knowledge their hath been a ferrey kept by his father & him self constantly for upwards of fifty years past and my Kingsman Informs me that he hath some time past Leased the ferry to his son Thomas he being his only son & truth of what is above written I am Redy to give my affirmation and subscribe myself with due Respect and greatful acknowledgement for the kindness our friends have Received since thy administration

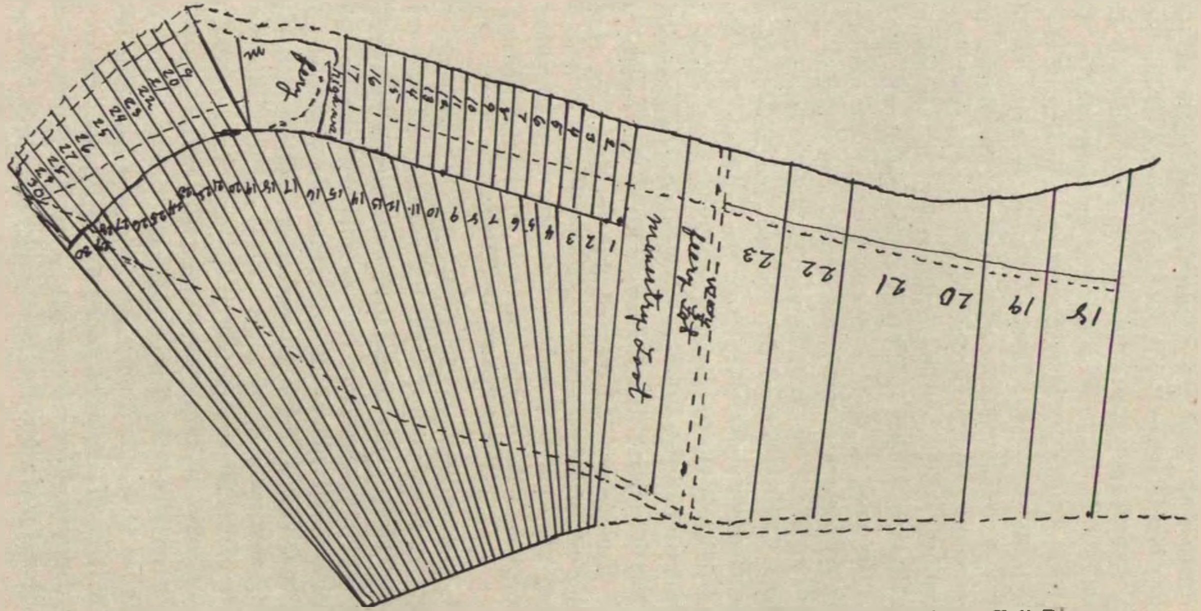
William Anthony"

On 7 May, 1745, Thomas Hicks, in a document dated at Portsmouth writes "Whereas my near neighbor Joseph Anthony desired me to give from under my hand something concerning his ferry—this may certify whom it may concern that I the subscriber have know it to be a ferry maintained by s'd Anthony's father and by him for fifty years or upwards constantly".

Job Almy made a similar statement about the ferry, but he refers to the period of the Anthonys ownership as "more than forty years past". It is likely, however, that the statements of William Anthony and Thomas Hicks are more nearly correct and that Joseph Anthony, Sr. began to operate the ferry soon after his removal to Pocasset. There is also among the Barker papers the lease above referred to of Joseph Anthony to his son Thomas of Tiverton of the privilege of the ferry, called Anthony's Ferry, from Tiverton to Rhode Island with boat, wharf and appurtenances for seven years for £20 old tenor. It was dated 27 June, 1744. Thomas Anthony died 23 January, 1767, but there is nothing about the ferry in his will.

Anthony's Ferry is mentioned in the acts fixing the rates of ferriage in 1747, 1750, 1752, 1756 and 1767. In 1752 Joseph Anthony received £20 for services as "guard at the ferries called Anthony's and Howland's Ferrys" to prevent the introduction of smallpox.

As has been previously referred to, the proprietors of Pocasset laid out a "northernmost ferry" lot and adjoining it on the south a "ministry lot" which were to be held in common. This ferry lot was the one where Anthony's Ferry was located. Reference will be made to the unsuccessful attempt of William Wodell and the successful attempt of Daniel Howland to obtain the title to the south ferry lot by buying up the rights of all the proprietors. Joseph Anthony and his son Joseph made a similar attempt to obtain the north ferry lot and they too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Part of layout of Pocasset Purchase, 1681, from early copy in office of City Engineer, Fall River.

were successful. Their first purchase was made 14 January, 1681-2, when Thomas Waite sold one quarter of one thirtieth of the Pocasset purchase to Joseph Anthony who had married his daughter Mary. The purchase was completed in August, 1743, when Joseph Anthony bought one thirtieth of the ferry lot from Joseph Cook. Most of the deeds were recorded in Bristol County, though some, found among the Barker papers, were apparently not recorded at all. By his will, probated 4 December, 1775, Joseph Anthony left to his son-in-law, Abram Barker, husband of his daughter Susannah, his homestead farm and ferry lot and one third of the ministry lot. Though no boat, or ferry, is mentioned, it is probable that the ferry was still in existence, though doubtless leased to someone else. This portion of the Pocasset purchase is shown in the accompanying plat taken from the original. The city engineer of Fall River has made a plat showing the lines of the original layout and also the present day streets and boundaries. From this it appears that Anthony's Ferry was located where is now Humphrey's Wharf and that the ferry lot extended from this wharf up the hill.

PORTSMOUTH TO TIVERTON

HOWLAND'S FERRY

This was also called Pocasset Ferry, Sanford's Ferry and Wanton's Ferry and, on a French military map as *Passage Americaine*. Undoubtedly this was the first ferry established in Rhode Island. The following are the entries in the mutilated record concerning it:

"The 7th of the 7th month 1640
Thomas Gorton is Chosen fferriman & is t
at the discretion of Mr. Porter Leitenant
his rates bee 6d a man & 3d if above three at once
goates & Kine 4d & he is to builde wh what conve
the meaentime to hyer when neede is
Itt is ordered that when the ferrie boats be built

to the Maine land w'h aine Canooe, in paine of
i day of november 1642
first it is ordered that whosoevers
of land whereoppon Tho: Gorton hath
house shall keepe the ferrie"

Apparently Gorton was not long satisfied with the rates of ferriage which had been established, for, 1 June, 1647, "At a towne metinge it is ordered that the towne Councell shall Cipittulate with Thomas Gorton aboute the ferrie & order the rates and all things aboute it either with hime or some other man if he refuse".

The "capitulation" was unsuccessful and John Sanford took over the ferry and, 21 June, 1647, the town council fixed the rates of ferriage and ordered Sanford to provide a boat for the ferry and in convenient time another boat sufficient to carry cattle. The following order is not perfectly clear but it probably required any man who carried any cattle in his own boat to pay to the town, or more likely to Sanford, a penny a head.

"& alsoe it is ordered that if any man carry any cattell over the watter to the mattatu(uth)es bay over the ferry they shall pay a peny a head every head soe carryed oor to any place that waye":

At this time, 16 June, 1647, Thomas Gorton sold to John Sanford of Portsmouth "all that my neck of Land Sitticate Lying in Portsmouth near to Pocasset River on Rhode Island aforesaid Together with all the buildings and fencing there unto belonging to have and to hold the aforesaid Land from the Eand of the Pinte southwardly to Mr. Hutchinson's land". Sanford also bought, 10 September, 1647, from Samuel Hutchinson, eight acres bounded north on land formerly belonging to Thomas Gorton, east and west by the salt water and south, or southwest, to extend twenty rods from the common "seller" and so athwart the neck.

It would appear from this that Thomas Gorton's land, and hence doubtless the ferry, was located at the end of what is now called Almy's Point. Later, as we shall see, the ferry landing was at the present site of Stone Bridge. Perhaps the change was made by John Sanford soon after he took control of the ferry.

Reference was made to the ferry in 1651 when Sanford and Brayton were to view the cattle transported off the Island at the ferry and in 1654 when Richard Bulger was licensed to sell beer, victuals and liquors to strangers that pass the ferry.

The ferry, however, had changed hands, for John Sanford, the elder, died in 1653 and by his will he left to his son, John, certain land and the ferry, the old house, half the cook room and two other houses. In the inventory is mentioned a great ferry-boat and tackling and a canoe.

The following is found in the colonial records, but as nothing further has been discovered relating to the subject, it is probable that the matter was settled out of court and we remain in ignorance as to the nature of the quarrel and who the other party was.

"Ordered, that the motion about the ferry, presented that the petitioner would be pleased to treat with Mr. John Sanford, to see whether they can end the diference betweene themselves; and if not, then to attend and present the thinge to the Court at ther next meeting." In any event Sanford still continued to operate the ferry for, 6 June, 1666, we find it called Sanford's Ferry.

Trouble again arose over the ferry, a few years later, as may be seen from the following extract from the Portsmouth records, though as before, we know nothing about the details.

"votted that the preposalls about the ferrey be Reed that Mr. John Sanfords Answers about the ferey be Reed that Mr. John Sanford is to have the preposalls about the ferey to Consider of them and to Returne them to the towne the Next Towne meetinge".

On 4 April, 1676, it was voted by the general assembly that a cannon be placed in Ferry Neck and another near the house of John Borden. This was during King Philip's War and the first named cannon was to guard Sanford's Ferry, and the last named to protect Bristol Ferry. John[2] Sanford died 25 January, 1687.

No will has been found, but his ferry property must have descended to his son, John[3], who doubtless continued to maintain the ferry for many years. On 12 February, 1695-6, John Sanford, son of John Sanford deceased, deeded to William Wanton of Newport, land adjoining Pocasset River called Sanford's ferry land. It included twenty acres bounded north on the cove, east on Pocasset River, west on land of William Wodell, together with the buildings and the privilege of the ferry. A deed, dated 9 December, 1700, refers to Wanton's ferry house. William Wanton was admitted a freeman of the town of Portsmouth in 1697, but he did not long continue the owner of the ferry, or indeed to reside in Portsmouth. This William Wanton was the son of Edward Wanton and later became governor of the colony. He married Ruth, the daughter of Deacon John Bryant of Scituate, Mass. There was serious opposition to the match. Bryant was a rigid "presbyterian" and detested quakers, to which sect Wanton belonged. Finally Wanton, in the presence of her family thus addressed the young lady: "Ruth, I am sure we were made for each other and neither of us can live without the other. Now let us cut the knot of difficulty. I will leave the quakers and thou thou shalt leave the presbyterians. We will both go to the Church of England and to the devil together." She agreed and they were married 1 June, 1691. On 27 February, 1701 William Wanton, now of Portsmouth, mortgaged this property to William Brock of Newport. The land was described as being in Ferry Neck in Portsmouth and was bounded west on the land of the widow Wodell, and on the other three sides by the common. William Wanton was a shipowner, actively engaged in maritime affairs and was doubtless away from home a good deal of the time. We know that he was on a privateering expedition from July to September 1702. Perhaps his employees did not always manage the ferry properly, thus giving rise to complaint, for first day, ninth month, 1702 we find this entry in the record: "William Wanton hath promised in this meeting that if any just complaint with sufficient witnesses be made in his absence concerning the keeping of the Ferry that he leases, Joseph Sheffield can turn out him that is the ferriman and put another in his place". Joseph Sheffield had been appointed ferry commissioner in the preceding May and Wanton apparently wished to place some responsibility upon him.

The mortgage deed was to be void if he paid the mortgage before 7 August, 1703. This he apparently did not do, for on 22 January, 1703-4, Peter Brock sold the property to Daniel Howland of Tiverton. This was the Daniel Howland who kept the ferry on the opposite side and who died about 1712. It is not likely that Daniel Howland, Sr. ever moved to Portsmouth, though we have found one reference to him as of Portsmouth in 1694, but this is probably an error, as there are frequent references to him as of Tiverton.

Probably Howland always employed others to operate the ferry-boats, or perhaps he sublet the ferry. As early as 1708 complaint was evidently made, for legal action was taken against Samuel Holly, tenant of Daniel Howland, for trespass and for withholding possession of the Ferry Neck. On twenty seventh day, sixth month, 1708 the town voted an "Address to the Governor and Gentlemen of the Jury". In this it was alleged that the town was competent to dispossess anyone holding the Neck and not performing the articles relating to keeping the ferry, and could put in whom it pleased, the land being principally for keeping the ferry, as the records show. "We are content" it reads "with the settlement of the Ferry and whose hands it is now in we hope you will decide the above action to be vexatious". This was certainly peculiar and irregular action for the town to take, but it shows that the majority of the citizens present supported Howland and his management of the ferry.

When Daniel Howland, Jr. moved to Portsmouth is not certain. He was of Tiverton at the time of his marriage, 16 January, 1713, and also in 1714, when he was called inn keeper in a deed, but in 1718 he and Abiel Trip, another ferryman were licensed by the town of Portsmouth to sell strong drink. No record has been found of the distribution of his father's estate, but doubtless he inherited the Portsmouth property and that side of the ferry. It was certainly in his possession in 1721, for, on August 2 of that year Daniel Howland and wife Judith mortgaged their homestead of twenty-nine acres, bounded north, east and south on the beach and west on the cove and on the land of Ruth Wodell, together with two islands.

In the layout of the highways, third day, fourth month, 1717, this ferry is called Pocasset Ferry.

On 3 June, 1734, a committee was appointed to inspect the records, there being an impediment in the passage of his Majesty's subjects to and from Howland's Ferry on the southerly side of the farm of Captain Robert Lawton.

On 14 May, 1725, Daniel Howland, ferryman, deeded certain land in Portsmouth. In June 1747 a petition by the inhabitants of Portsmouth was sent to the general assembly for a bridge over Wodell's Creek in the road to Daniel Howland's. On 9 September, 1747, a lease was granted to Daniel Howland for the ferry for a period of seven years, but he did not long remain its proprietor, for 26 August, 1748, he and his wife Judith sold to Peleg Slocum of Dartmouth, for £4,500, their land in Ferry Neck, bounded south and east on the salt water, north "on the going in of the Cove" and west on the cove and on the land of Joseph Scott, together with houses, ferry-boat, wharves and Hen and Spectacle Islands. Shortly afterwards, Peleg Slocum sold it to Holder Slocum. By his will, 24 April, 1758, Holder Slocum left to his wife Rebecca, the Ferry Neck, bought of his cousin Peleg Slocum, where Daniel Howland dwelt, with two islands, ferry-boat, wharves and buildings. Rebecca Slocum left the property to her daughter, Mary Tucker, 26 March, 1771. As the Slocums and Tuckers lived in Dartmouth they doubtless sublet the ferry, or hired others to operate it for them, but of this we have no knowledge.

In June, 1792, a petition was presented to the general assembly asking for authority to construct a bridge at Howland's Ferry and a charter was granted in February 1794.

On 11 August, 1794, Mary Tucker of Dartmouth, widow, sold to the Rhode Island Bridge Co. her wharf in Portsmouth at the place commonly called Howland's Ferry, and a further width so as to make up eighty feet, with a way therefrom up to the road near my dwelling house, to the road in the land of John Scott. This definitely fixes the location of Howland's Ferry at the site of the present Stone Bridge.

A wooden bridge, built on piles, was opened for traffic 15 October, 1795, but was carried away by the tide in January, 1796. It was rebuilt, being completed 20 November, 1796. The piles were so eaten by worms that it was again carried away in the autumn of 1797. It is probable that whenever the bridge was out of commission a ferry was at once established to accommodate the traffic, especially during the long period from 1797 to 1810. Indeed there are references to the ferry, its boats and wharves in the reports of the ferry commissioners for 1798, June 1799, and June and October 1800, but no mention is made of the proprietors, or ferrymen. Josiah Quincy in his diary, under the date June 6, 1801, records crossing the ferry and noting the remains of the bridge which had been twice carried away. The next bridge was built of stone and was opened in July, 1810. A breach, 200 feet long, was made in this bridge by the September gale of 1815 and, according to the Newport Mercury of September 30, a ferry-boat was at once put on, and probably continued in service until the bridge was re-opened in the autumn of 1817. The September gale of 1869 made another breach in the bridge. We are told by Herbert M. C. Skinner of Fall River that foot passengers were carried over in small boats, but vehicles went to Fall River and, taking the Providence steamboat, were landed at Bristol Ferry. In the early part of the twentieth century it became necessary to construct a new bridge and a state commission was appointed for that purpose. As soon as the old bridge became impassible, a ferry-boat was put on capable of carrying vehicles. According to Mr. Skinner this was the

"*West Side*" built and owned by Stillman Saunders of Saunderstown. This boat will be referred to in the account of the ferry between Jamestown and Saunderstown. The new bridge was opened 1 August, 1907.

TIVERTON TO PORTSMOUTH

HOWLAND'S FERRY

In 1640, soon after the settlement of Portsmouth, a ferry was established between the Island of Rhode Island and the mainland about where Stone Bridge now is. This portion of the mainland was commonly called Pocasset and, though it was alleged by Plymouth Colony to have been purchased of the Indians, no jurisdiction was exercised, and there were only a very few scattered settlers. It was practically Indian country until after King Philip's War. The nearest settlement to the east was Dartmouth. It was not surprising that there was no demand for many years for a ferry from the mainland to The Island. On 5 March, 1667-8, the following order was issued by the court of Plymouth: "It being desired that a ferrey be kept on our side to transport persons over to Road Iland the Court hath appointed John Cooke and other neighbors of Dartmouth to take order with one to do the same". Permission was also given to whomsoever they might employ to erect a small building and improve the land with the permission of the Indians. On 3 June, 1668, it was ordered "that the ferrey att Pochasset be ordered and to farme lett by John Cooke and Daniell Willcocks in behalfe of the country". On 5 July, 1669, Ralph Allyn was permitted to keep a ferry at or near Pocasset and to purchase 100 acres of the Indians on condition that he pay £10 to the colony. On 7 July, 1674, John Simmons was granted liberty, with the consent of the proprietors of Pocasset, to build a house, on condition that he keep a ferry. He was also licensed to keep an ordinary. If Simmons established a ferry it was doubtless interrupted during King Philip's War, but appears to have been set up again, for 1 November, 1676, the court ordered a ferry at Pocasset to transport people over to Rhode Island, and prohibited any other on that coast. There was also a grant of twenty acres to belong to said ferry for planting land to be laid out by Nathaniel Thomas, William Pabody and Capt. Church. John Simmons was allowed by the court to keep the ferry for five years and, in case he carried himself well, for five years more. If he gave up the ferry, the country was to pay for such housing as he left. He was to keep a house of entertainment for strangers so long as he kept good order. The ferry landing on the Rhode Island side was where the western terminus of Stone Bridge now is, and it seems probable that the Pocasset landing place was not far from the east end of the bridge, for the lot which was soon to be laid out as the ferry lot was that now (1922) occupied by the Riverside Inn. Although Simmons had the exclusive franchise, other parties interfered with his business, as is shown by an order of the court, 7 June, 1677, that whosoever shall either ferry over persons or cattle, unless by and under the aforesaid Simmons, shall for every such offence pay a fine of five shillings unto the said John Simmons, one half for the colony and one half for himself. If he, or they, refuse to pay, then the said Simmons shall seize upon any boat, or vessel, improved in ferrying contrary to order, one half for the use of the colony and one half for the said John Simmons. Not long after this, Simmons removed from the ferry, for, on 10 December, 1679, in a deed, he states that he resided on the Freemen's Land on the east side of Taunton River. Who had the ferry for the next few years we do not know. Perhaps Simmons moved because of the impending purchase of the Pocasset lands by a company of speculators.

Previous to this time another ferry had been established on the Rhode Island side about half a mile north of the old ferry, at a place called the "Common Fence" and at that part of it now known as the Hummocks. On 5 March, 1679-80, Plymouth Colony deeded all the lands to the "Purchasers of Pocasset." The first meeting of these proprietors was held 21 April, 1681. It was agreed that the land from Sinning Flesh

River to Durfee's Ferry be laid out into thirty house lots and one lot for a minister and two ferry lots, and there should be a highway across all the lots from the freemens land to the ferry and from the ferry to Puncatest lands, "Also the said Proprietors voted and agreed all of them that none shall keep a public ferry, but only such as the sd. ferry lots shall be let or hired unto." The entry in the record relating to the lot at Howland's Ferry is as follows: "The Ferry lot Which lyeth over against Sanford's Ferry on the south side of the highway, we Laid out a lot for a ferry of twenty rods wide." At the same time a highway of five rods was laid out on the south side of the seventeenth lot from the ferry point to the head of the lots. This would indicate that the ferry, previous to 1681, had been near the point where Stone Bridge now is. This highway is the present road leading up the hill now called Lawton Avenue. The house lots were eight rods wide and extended up the hill some distance beyond the present road to Little Compton. East of the house lots were the "gore" lots and north of the house lots was the minister's lot and then the ferry lot; then a highway and then a great lot, No. 23. All this appears on the plat shown on a previous page.

The next reference to these ferries we have found is in the layout of certain highways, 8 May, 1688. The layout of the road from Taunton to Little Compton describes its course through the Pocasset purchase as following the ancient path till it comes to the Pocasset lots where it met with a way laid out by the proprietors to Durfee's Ferry and so along the bank to Woodwall's Ferry and thence to Little Compton. In describing the road from Dartmouth to Freetown the surveyors say that they turned out of the road from said town to Pocasset Ferry and thence into the road between Freetown and Pocasset. The plat shows the roads above described leading down to the two ferries. The Woodwall referred to above, was doubtless William Wodell who thus appears to have been in possession, at that time, of Pocasset Ferry, later known as Howland's Ferry. On 19 August, 1689, Thomas Waite of Newport sold to Joseph Anthony of Portsmouth one quarter of a share in Pocasset, except the share in the South Ferry where William Wodell now dwelleth. It is probable that Wodell had hired the South Ferry lot from the proprietors in accordance with their plan. William Wodell was the son of Gershom and grandson of William Wodell of Portsmouth whose land adjoined that of John Sanford, at that time proprietor of the Rhode Island side of the ferry. William Wodell, called "Jr.," to distinguish him from his grandfather, was born in 1663 and was married 10 February, 1681, when he was only about eighteen years old.

As has been previously shown, in both Bristol and Pocasset, where the ferry lots were held by the proprietors, individuals tried to get full control by the purchase of rights from the different proprietors. They thus endeavored to obtain the title to the land and become independent of the proprietors. This is what William Wodell tried to do. His first recorded purchase was one sixtieth part of the ferry lot from Capt. Benjamin Church, 6 February, 1688-9. In this deed he is called William Wodell, Jr., of Pocasset and he is usually so designated in the different deeds until the last one found, 24 August 1692. In this deed he is called of Portsmouth. At this time he held all of the thirty shares. His father died in 1693 and it is not unlikely that soon after he relinquished his ferry business in Pocasset and moved to his father's farm in Portsmouth, where he died in 1699 and where his widow Ruth lived for many years afterwards. The deeds of these ferry rights were recorded in the land records of Bristol County Vol. 9, and were not recorded until 17 April, 1715. Most of these, with the addition of two or three others, are also recorded, mostly in 1694, in Vol. 2 of Portsmouth land evidence.

So far as is known, Daniel Howland was the next keeper of the ferry, though when he came into possession is uncertain. On 2 February, 1701-2, Samuel Little sold to Daniel Howland one half of a gusset, gore, or house lot, near the dwelling of Daniel Howland and adjoining the south side of the lot called the ferry lot. It is further described as sold to Little and Howland by the proprietors 8 December, 1697, though this deed has not been found. The location of this lot is clearly shown on the plat.

Although William Wodell had, by his purchase of proprietors' rights, apparently become the sole owner of the southernmost ferry lot in Tiverton, by 1692, there must have been some trouble about these purchases, or the deeds. Daniel Howland also began to buy the rights in the ferry lot in 1694, soon after it is believed that William Wodell returned to Portsmouth. Howland's first purchase was 12 November, 1694, when he obtained from Gershom Mott a little over half the rights which Mott had previously sold to Wodell in 1690. Thomas Gray and John Cook also sold rights to Daniel Howland, though they had previously sold them to Wodell. Howland's last purchase was from Gray, 19 December, 1700, at which time he appeared from the record, to own about two thirds of the rights in the ferry lot. The fact that Wodell's deeds were recorded in Bristol County in 1715 suggests that legal difficulty arose soon after the death of the elder Daniel Howland. No deed has been found from Wodell and, though Daniel Howland's son John and grandson Thomas continued to purchase rights from time to time, we have not determined whether they finally secured a full title, though they probably did.

The estate of Daniel Howland of Tiverton was probated twenty sixth day, eleventh month, 1711-12. The inventory, sworn to by his widow Mary and eldest son Daniel, contains this item: "his two ferrey boats with oares, with three cannos £13.10.0." Daniel's son John continued to live in Tiverton and presumably operated that side of the ferry. His brother Daniel removed to Portsmouth where he became proprietor of the ferry on that side. Another brother, Isaac, moved to Sandwich and both Daniel and Isaac sold their shares in their father's real estate in Tiverton to their brother John. In both of these deeds John was called shipwright. He was inn holder in 1719, a business commonly associated with ferrying. In October, 1724, Tobias Brown was fined for desecrating the Sabbath on his way from John Howland's Ferry. This is the first documentary evidence that John Howland owned the ferry, but it is highly probable that he had done so since the death of his father, whose real estate, near the ferry he inherited, or purchased from his brothers. John Howland hired land from the proprietors for many years and, at a meeting held in 1739, it was stated that John Howland had erected a smith's shop near the stone pound and had built two large wharves and warehouses at the western end of some of the house lots which was, it was stated, in the most convenient place from Anthony's Ferry to Sinning Flesh River, except where Joseph Wanton had built a wharf. Where these warehouses were we have no certain knowledge.

After Tiverton was transferred to Rhode Island, 28 May, 1746, it became necessary that a ferry license be obtained from the Rhode Island authorities. On September 9, 1747, the ferry committee granted a lease to John Howland of Tiverton for seven years, of a ferry from his wharf in Tiverton to Portsmouth. John Howland died sometime between 1752-1757, for, in the former year he hired his land from the proprietors as usual and in the latter year his son Thomas hired the land formerly leased to John Howland. The ferry continued to be called Howland's Ferry in 1759. The John Howland above referred to had a son Thomas, who married Sarah, daughter of Abraham Borden who inherited from her grandfather, Joseph Wanton, a valuable property on the shore in Tiverton. They had a son, John, born in 1749 who, when he grew up, married Grace, daughter of Edward Church.

By a deed, dated 6 September, 1759, Thomas Howland of Tiverton states that "whereas my honored father John Howland of Tiverton, merchant, died intestate, his real estate descended to me, but a little before he died he gave to my son John all his real estate." Consequently Thomas, in accordance with his father's wishes, deeded to his son John all the land his father was possessed of, being the house lots lying between the 14th and 20th lots, amounting to 44 acres, also two gore lots and dwelling house and his wife Sarah relinquished her right of dower therein.

No further reference to this land has been found until 8

August 1776 when John Howland and his father Thomas sold to Thomas Cory all land at a place called Howland's Ferry between the five rod road (now Lawton Avenue) and the 18th lot, then in possession of Isaac Cory. Nothing was said about the ferry property, but when the property was, on August 30, transferred by Cory to Nathaniel Briggs, the sale included his interest in the ferry wharves, beaches and commons. As this lot was that extending up the hill directly east of Stone Bridge, it quite definitely locates the ancient ferry as close to the present terminus of the bridge. It is not unlikely that Isaac Cory, the tenant, owned the ferry-boat and operated the ferry.

There is no evidence that any Howland owned the ferry after 1776, but it continued to be called Howland's Ferry so long as there was any ferry in this vicinity. It was never called anything else in either the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, although for many years it must have been owned by persons of another name. As the Howlands were well-to-do people, it is not likely that they sailed the boats. They either hired men to do this for them, or, perhaps, sub-let the ferry to tenants, as did Daniel Howland on the other side.

The history and traditions of Tiverton all refer to the location of the ferry as at the blacksmith's shop nearly opposite the post office. Indeed the remains of the two ferry wharves and the slip between them may now be seen at low water at this place. This ferry wharf is mentioned in deeds of 1812, 1830 and 1837.

The first reference to this shore lot was in 1756 when it was in possession of Thomas Howland above referred to, who stated that it was granted to him by the proprietors. The lot was described as 104 feet wide and extending to the channel and containing an old wharf and warehouse. This would indicate that the ferry was not there in 1756 and that the lot did not, indeed, belong to Thomas' father, John, who had recently died and who had owned the ferry for many years. The lot passed through several owners, Davol, Slocum and Norton. The first reference made to a ferry is when William Norton leased the premises to Benjamin R. Manchester, 10 January,

1812. This lease refers to the ferry wharf and a blacksmith's shop which A. Lincoln Hambly, the town clerk of Tiverton, says was located about where the southerly end of the present blacksmith's shop is. On 11 September, 1830 a part of the property is described as bounded on the ferry wharf so called. On 29 July, 1837 William Norton sold the half part of the water lot bounded southerly in a line with the south side of the old ferry wharf. This included the south wharf, the ferry slip and most of the north wharf. The sale was to Edwin Hambly, the father of A. Lincoln Hambly, in whose family it has remained until the present time. The house lot just north of the present post office, and nearly opposite this ferry place, belonged to General Benjamin Howland ,afterwards a United States senator, and in the early part of the nineteenth century was called the Ferry Lot. A share in this ferry lot descended to the wife of A. Lincoln Hambly. Mr. Hambly is firmly convinced that Howland's Ferry was always situated about where the present blacksmith's shop is. It does not seem to us that this is so. The original layout of the ferry lot and of the highway to it, the plat showing the location of this layout, the residence of William Wodell at the South Ferry in 1689, the residence of Daniel Howland near the ferry in 1701-2 and particularly the deeds of John Howland and Thomas Cory in 1776, all point to the early location of the ferry as opposite the original lot and not far from the present terminus of the bridge. Indeed, we have no reason to think that the location of the ferry was changed until after the bridge had been built and destroyed.

By a deed, 2 August, 1794, the proprietors of the Pocasset Purchase, for six shillings, sold to the Rhode Island Bridge Company "eighty feet in width of land lying in Pocasset Purchase in said Tiverton, at or near Howland's Ferry, to begin at the Easterly end of said bridge when erected and to run Eastward thereof as said bridge shall judge most convenient and keeping the said width of eighty feet until it shall reach the public highway about ten or twelve rods above the same." This description seems to fit in well with a location of the ferry near Stone Bridge, but not at the blacksmith's shop. Moreover there is no reference to a ferry landing in the transfer of the blacksmith's lot in 1756, 1776, 1782, 1794, 1799, and 1800, nor was the property at any time owned by a Howland and the ferry was never called by any other name than Howland's. As we have seen, the bridge was out of commission early in 1796 and remained so a large part of the time until 1810. There are various references to Howland's Ferry during this period but we have no knowledge of who operated it. It appears likely that it was at this period that the ferry landing was where the blacksmith's shop is.

PORTSMOUTH TO TIVERTON

COOK'S FERRY

This was also often called Fogland Ferry and later it was known as Cadman's Ferry. When it was established we do not know. The first reference found is the bill of William Cook for attendance at the ferry called Cook's Ferry to prevent the introduction of smallpox. This bill was presented in August, 1738. William Cook was the son of Joseph Cook who owned property on the shore, which he left to William when he died in 1745. On it was a wharf, dwelling and other buildings. Most of this land had been in possession of Joseph Cook since 1701. It is not unlikely that Joseph maintained a ferry there for many years. William undoubtedly left it to his son, Joseph, though no will, or deed, is on record. On 16 March, 1762, this Joseph Cook, ferryman, sold to Christopher Cadman of Dartmouth, for £13,000 current money, the some thirty-one acres which had belonged to his grandfather, Joseph, together with wharves, buildings, and ferry rights. By his will, dated 16 February, 1764, Christopher Cadman divided his real estate between his sons. To his son, Gideon, he left the south portion of the land with houses, wharves and boat. His inventory contained a boat and a canoe. An advertisement in the Newport Mercury, 16 March, 1767, refers to the widow Cadman's

Ferry, and the ferry house is called Cadman's in Anderson's Almanacks for 1772 and 1773-4. This is the last reference we have found to this ferry and we have been unable to find what became of the Cadmans, or of their property.

The ferry was called Cook's Ferry in the acts regulating the rates of ferriage in 1743, 1747, 1750, 1752, 1756 and 1767, the latter illustrating how the old name persisted after a change in ownership. There is no evidence that it was operated after the Revolution.

We do know very definitely where the ferry was located. A deed of Pardon and Rachel Sisson, dated 13 March, 1811, describes the property then sold as commonly called the Fogland Ferry farm, bounded east on the river and south on the land of Joseph Cundall. The Cundall property had been in that family since 1745 when it was purchased of James and Deborah Sisson and contained a dwelling house and fulling mill.

The fulling mill now stands in what is called the Glen and the two ferry wharves can be distinctly seen at low water just north of the large wharf recently built on the Henry A. C. Taylor estate. Besides the evidence from the land records, it is a tradition among old residents that this was the location of the ferry. It is almost opposite the wharf on Fogland Point. Much of the information about this ferry was obtained from George R. Hicks, the town clerk of Portsmouth, who kindly pointed out to us the remains of the old ferry wharf.

Tiverton to Portsmouth

Fogland, or Almy's Ferry.

Puncatest Neck is situated in the southerly part of Tiverton and from it Fogland Point extends into the bay at the narrowest place below Stone Bridge. Job Almy of Portsmouth very early obtained possession of a large tract of land on this neck and was living there at the time of King Philip's War as is narrated by Capt Church.

The first we hear of this ferry was 21 January, 1706-7, when

Capt. Thomas Townshend asked to keep a ferry from Puncatest Neck to the Rhode Island side and "to state it upon him or his order." The court considering the benefit of the ferry, granted to Job Almy, the son-in-law (stepson) of Capt. Townshend and son of the first Job Almy, the privilege of said ferry, he to give bond and provide a good boat with sails and oars. In August of that year Almy applied for a license to sell strong drink and the license was granted.

As will later be referred to, a ferry license was, in 1715, granted to William Almy, counsin of Job. This probably caused family difficulty, for, in July of the next year Job Almy secured a hearing before the court and William was summoned to be present. In July, 1726, the rates of ferriage at Fogland Ferry were raised fifty percent. In January, 1716, in October, 1730, and in February, 1731-2, Job Almy had trouble with the selectmen of Tiverton about keeping the road to Fogland Ferry in repair. The next reference to this ferry is in the act regulating rates of ferriage passed in 1747. In this act, however, the name is spelled Amy's Ferry. This is not surprising for at that time Almy was commonly pronounced with the "l" silent. This annoyed Almy and, in a petition presented by him and others to the general assembly in 1753 for an increase in the rates of ferriage, he asked to have the error in his name corrected. Almy's Ferry is mentioned in the acts fixing rates of ferriage passed in 1747, 1752, and 1767. Job Almy died 25 January, 1767, and left all his lands in Tiverton to his son Job.

This ferry was interrupted during the Revolution, for the British had a man-of-war in the channel and fortified the American side. On 9 September, 1780, a petition was presented to the general assembly signed by many inhabintants of Tiverton and Dartmouth and some of Rhode Island, asking that the ferry be re-established. It was alleged that Mr. John Almy, who was then the owner of the ferry, declined to do it because he was afraid that the regulars would destroy it. Joseph Almy said that he had a place convenient for travelers and that his boat was almost done and he asked for the privilege of setting up a ferry. John Almy was cited to appear before the assembly and on the second Monday of September Joseph Almy was granted permission to set up a ferry in that place. We have no knowledge as to whether the ferry ever was re-established, but if it was, it was again abandoned, for, in the revision of the laws of 1798, it was provided that license should be granted for Fogland Ferry, if the proprietors thereof should see fit to establish the ferry within one year. The report of the ferry commissioners for 1799 states that Fogland Ferry had not been established except that private small boats passed to accommodate neighbors.

As the Almys were well-to-do people it is probable that they leased the ferry to others. Little is known as to whom these were. According to Anderson's Almanack for 1772 and 1773-4, Edward Gray kept the ferry house in Tiverton for this ferry. This is the man whose wife, Sarah, had trouble with Hessian soldiers during the Revolution, as was referred to in the account of the "Ferries in Wartime." According to an advertisement in the Newport Mercury, 16 March, 1767, it would appear that Capt. Edward Gray was also at that time keeper of the ferry. H. W. Blake, in his History of the Town of Tiverton says that when the ferry was owned by John Almy it was operated during the Revolution by Thomas Wilcox, who assisted in obtaing information concerning the British by means of signals arranged for with Isaac Barker on the Island. No comtemporary evidence of this has been found. The land where this ferry was situated has remained in the Almy family from its first settlement to the present time. Leon F. Almy, the present owner of the farm, says that the modern wharf there standing is built on the site of the ancient ferry wharf, the stones of which can now be seen at low water. The present way winding down to the wharf probably follows quite closely the old ferry road.

TIVERTON TO PORTSMOUTH

WILLIAM ALMY'S FERRY

William Almy was a cousin of the Job Almy who received the grant of Fogland Ferry in 1706-7. He owned a large farm adjoining Job Almy on the north. On 11 August, 1715, he petitioned the court that he might be permitted to keep a ferry from his own land to Rhode Island. Various people in Dartmouth and Little Compton, signed the petition, which was referred to the October session of the court. At that session the court granted the license on the ground that the ferry formerly granted to Mr. William Forbes of Little Compton, deceased, had not been improved since his death and there was more need of a ferry than formerly. William Almy was required to allow passage through his land to Job Almy's ferry. William's privilege was to be surrendered if Forbes' Ferry was ever re-established. We have found no other reference to this ferry. William Almy had a wharf as shown by his will dated 29 April, 1747.

LITTLE COMPTON TO PORTSMOUTH

FORBES' FERRY

On 21 January, 1706-7, Mr. William Fobes (as the name was then commonly spelled), of Little Compton, petitioned the court for the privilege of keeping a ferry in Little Compton at a place where he had begun to build a wharf on his own land. This was granted on the same terms and conditions as the ferry franchise granted to Job Almy, and Forbes was required to give a bond in the sum of £30. William Forbes died 6 November, 1712. His will was probated 18 December, 1712, and by it he left to his grandson "Fobes" Southworth, the westward end of the "forth" great lot in number, from the highway to the sea and pond, with the ferry-boat, wharf, and housing and all the privileges thereunto belonging. Edward Southworth married Mary, daughter of William Forbes, who gave birth to a son, Forbes Southworth, 1 September, 1710. Mary Forbes died 29 July, 1712. The ferry continued in operation for a time at least, as is shown by the following newspaper item, 2 April, 1714. On Friday last the ferry-boat from Seaconnet, while coming over to Sandy Point, with twelve horses on board, struck on a blind rock and immediately sank and drowned John Searles, son of Nathaniel of Little Compton, and Jack Matthews, a negro. Edward Southward (Southworth) clung to the mast until Job Almy came off in a canoe and saved him. The horses swam to land. At that time Job Almy kept the ferry from Fogland Point to the Island of Rhode Island and doubtless Forbes' ferry-boat on her way from Little Compton, struck a rock off the southerly end of Fogland Point. It is probable that Edward Southworth was operating the ferry during this period for the benefit of his little son. The landing place at the Rhode Island terminus of Fogland Ferry was not very far from Sandy Point and it seems more likely that the Little Compton ferry-boat made a landing at this wharf, rather than at a separate landing place at Sandy Point itself.

The newspaper article refers to the Seaconnet ferry-boat, but there is no reason to think that the ferry ran from that part of Little Compton which we now call Seaconnet. At a meeting of the proprietors, 21 September, 1710, Mr. William Forbes was granted five rods at his wharf which the committee was to lay out, reserving to the proprietors three rods below the foot of the fifth great lot for a highway. From William Forbes' will we learn that the ferry was on the fourth great lot at about where the creek from Nonquit Pond flows into the bay.

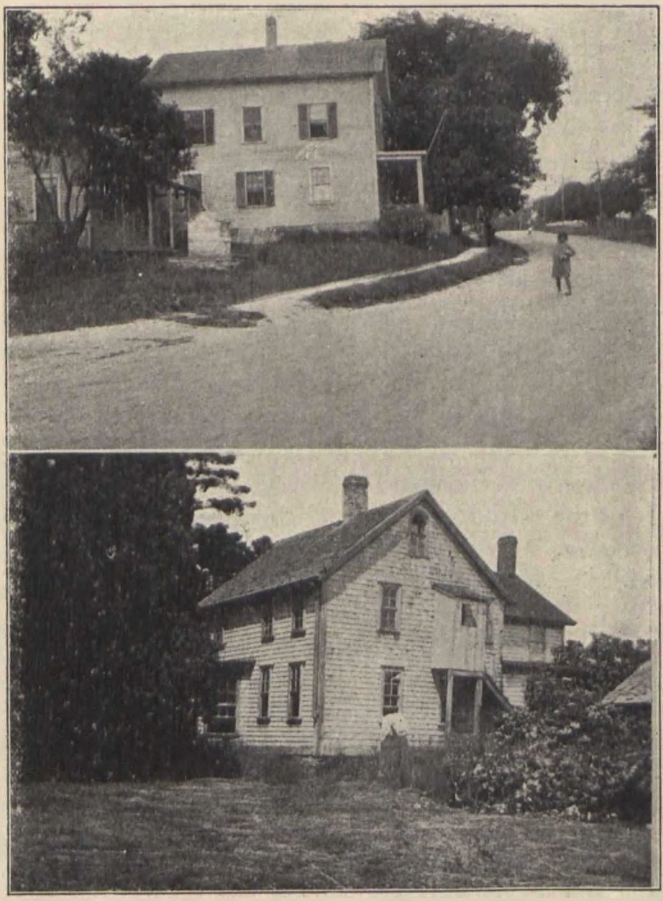
Sydney R. Burleigh says that, when he was a boy, there were two very old houses not far from the shore, just below where the road from Adamsville joins the West Road. One of these was called the Ferryman's House. It was a small, one and one half story house, with a door in the centre and a large chimney.

Lester E. Wilbur, the town clerk of Little Compton, tells us that William Forbes had a grandson, Forbes Little, to whom he left land in the vicinity of this "ferry house", but which he has not been able to locate exactly. Perhaps, later, following the traditions of the family, Little established a ferry at this place. Perhaps, and this is more likely, a ferry was in operation here after the Revolution. If so, it was probably not licensed, just as Taggart's Ferry, a little further south was not licensed. We know that after the Revolution and the abandonment of Fogland Ferry there was unlicensed ferry traffic in this vicinity.

Middletown to Little Compton

This was commonly called Taggart's Ferry, though it was sometimes called Howland's Ferry from its last owner. This, however, must not be confused with the Howland's Ferry so long maintained at the site of Stone Bridge.

We have found no documentary evidence relating to this ferry, though it is common knowledge among the older inhabitants of the Island and of Little Compton that the ferry was in operation for many years during the early and middle part of the nineteenth century. It is not likely that it was ever licensed. This is the opinion of Albert L. Chase, who has been town clerk of Middletown for about forty years, and whose grandfather served for a similar period before him. For one hundred and fifty years there was a large traffic in farm produce across the East Passage from Little Compton to Newport. For a long time there was a landing place at Sachuest Point, but there is no evidence that there was ever an established ferry. Taggart's Ferry was situated farther up the bay, at a little cove at the eastern terminus of the Green End Road in Middletown, close by the Berkeley Memorial Chapel. When the ferry was established we do not know. The fact that Fogland Ferry was abandoned after the Revolution, except for small boats, probably led to the establishment of Taggart's Ferry. William Taggart was a merchant of Newport who purchased two hundred acres of land in this locality in 1770. He deeded to his son Joseph, in 1796, fourteen acres bounded on the cove above referred to, with a right of way across the brook. Joseph's land was situated north of the brook. He was a mariner and was probably lost at sea, as his widow, Sarah, was appointed administrator 20 February, 1809, as he had not been heard from in three years. It is



Upper—Briggs' Ferry House, west side of Jamestown. Lower—Taggart's Ferry House.

possible that this Joseph may have established the ferry, but it is more likely to have been his son William. This William died in 1847 and among the items in his inventory is a skiff and a boat and sail. William Taggart had four children, Joseph W., Benjamin F., Elizabeth W., and William G. His farm of thirty acres was divided among them. The daughter, Elizabeth W., married William B. Howland who, partly through his wife's right, and partly by a purchase, became possessed of the Taggart Farm, which he sold to Eugene Sturtevant 14 September, 1871. The Taggart Ferry house stood between the site of Madame Bonard's house and the water, a little north of the brook. The house was moved in 1871 a short distance up the Green End Road, on the south side, where it now stands surrounded by trees. It is shown in the illustration. Mrs. Frances S. Smith, a daughter of William B. Howland, lived in the ferry house when a child and has given us most of the information about this ferry. She says that her father operated the ferry for some years and that before him, it was conducted by her uncle Benjamin Howland who lived in the house now occupied by Kline, the milkman. Another uncle, John Howland, was accustomed to drive the travelers, with their goods, into Newport. These Howlands were descendents of the Daniel Howland who was the owner of the other Howland's Ferry for so many years. Sydney R. Burleigh says that this ferry was probably never equipped for carrying live stock, but transported farmers with their butter, eggs and poultry for the Newport market. Mr. Burleigh remembers crossing over this ferry from Little Compton in 1870, as the most convenient way to Providence.

LITTLE COMPTON TO MIDDLETOWN

According to Mr. Burleigh this side of the ferry was last operated by Deacon W. Church. He lived on the north side of Taylor's Lane about a quarter of a mile from the shore in a house now standing, but much altered. The landing place was at the foot of this lane where its remains can plainly be seen. This was not used for a ferry landing exclusively. Indeed, as early as 1763, the general assembly was asked to permit a lottery to build a wharf at Church's harbor, probably at this point. According to the descendents of the Taggarts, now living in Middletown, Amasa Gray was keeper of this side of the ferry before Deacon Church. The ferry was abandoned soon after the Civil War because the rapid growth of Fall River and New Bedford made these cities a better market for the farm produce of Little Compton than was Newport. The last ferry-boat was a small affair and is now on Mr. Burleigh's lawn. It is shown in the section on "Ferry Boats".

The Island of Rhode Island to Prudence Island

Lawton's Ferry

In 1742 a new route of travel was laid out necessitating the establishment of several ferries of which Lawton's Ferry was one. The following account is taken from the colonial records.

"Whereas John Lawton and Barlo Greene, did, by petition, set forth to this assembly, that the establishing a ferry from the landing place, in said Lawton's farm at Portsmouth, in said colony, to the southern part of Prudence Island, belonging to Benjamin and William Brown; and another from Warwick Neck, to the northern end of said Prudence Island, would be greatly serviceable to the public, by furnishing the northwestern parts of this colony, and those of the neighboring governments with a more easy and better passage to Newport, the metropolis of this colony, than is possible to obtain from any of the ferries now settled at other places; the lands being more smooth and level, the way by land and water more direct and much shorter; and as all the parties concerned, are not only willing, but very desirous such ferries may be made, therefore, the petitioners prayed that ferries may be erected and appointed at the places aforesaid;—

Upon consideration whereof, it is voted and enacted, that there be ferries at the places above mentioned; and that the committee appointed to lease out the ferries, put the ferries now granted, under the same regulations as the others are."

This was on the fourth Monday in November 1742. This ferry is referred to in the acts fixing rates of ferriage passed in 1747, 1750 and 1752.

According to Jacob Chase the Lawton Ferry House was built in very early times by one of the Hazards and was enlarged by Isaac and John Lawton to be used as a tavern for the ferry which had its landing place on their shore. The house stood near the railroad track and about twenty rods north of the burial ground. Jacob Chase says that the old house was torn down about thirty-five years previous to his writing (1882). This portion of the Lawton farm was just south of the present Town Farm.

Prudence Island to the Island of Rhode Island

This was called Pearce's Ferry, the name being spelled in different ways at different times and on different documents.

This was the ferry opposite Lawton's Ferry. The only direct documentary evidence we have found of its existence is its mention in connection with Lawton's Ferry in the acts fixing the rates of ferriage passed in 1747, 1750, 1752 and the placing of a sentinel at Prudence Island Ferry to prevent travelers coming from New York or any other infected place. This was 16 April, 1746.

Daniel Pearce was an early resident of Prudence Island. Nathaniel and Jonathan were his sons and the land records of Portsmouth, of which town Prudence is a part, note many of their transfers of real estate. William Brown of Salem purchased one half of Prudence Island from Edward Rainbrow, 21 February, 1672, and his son Benjamin took possession of it in 1678. Benjamin Brown, 31 January, 1742, sold 170 acres on Prudence to Nathaniel and Jonathan Pearce. Again, 1 January, 1747, Brown sold 340 acres more to Nathaniel Pearce. Both of these pieces of land abutted east on the bay and doubtless on one of them was located the ferry landing provided for by the act of general assembly, 1742. From the last deed to Nathaniel Pearce above mentioned, we learn that Pearce had been a tenant of the property before its purchase from Brown. According to Capt. Halsey Chase, whose family have lived on Prudence for many generations, the ferry landing was situated half a mile, or more, south of what is now called Bullock's wharf and near a large boulder about opposite the north end of Dyer's Island. Some of the oak logs of the old ferry wharf may still be seen. A wharf is shown in this location on both the DesBarres' map of 1776 and the Blaskowitz map of 1777. Charles E. Allen of Attleboro, who is much interested in Prudence Island history, describes the location as opposite John Albro's house near the brook. According to Mr. Allen it is a common tradition that, about 1746, the mail from Providence to Newport was carried on horseback across the ferries and over Prudence Island the postman delivering the mail for the islanders at what was known as the village, at about the centre of the island.

This ferry is referred to in a vote of the town of Newport, 16 April, 1746, when guards were stationed to prevent travelers coming from infectious places, "one to be at Jamestown Ferry and the other at Prudence Island ferry."

The next reference we find to the ferry was 23 June, 1750, when Meribah Pearce of Prudence Island, who was the widow of Nathaniel, sold to John Tillinghast, merchant, a ferry-boat with its appurtenances. John Tillinghast was an owner of considerable land on Prudence at this time. Whether he continued to operate the ferry, we do not know.

NICHOLS' AND FREEBORN'S FERRY

This ferry was referred to in the act fixing the rates of ferriage in 1747. The rates were higher than for any other ferry except Pearce's and Lawton's, perhaps because it was a long ferry, or perhaps because there was little traffic, or both. This is probably the ferry that was called Wall's and Freeborn's in the act of 1750. Here again the rates were higher than in any other ferry except Pearce's and Lawton's. We have no knowledge of where this ferry was, nor have we found any other reference to it. The rates were the same for both ferries in both acts.

PRUDENCE ISLAND TO BRISTOL

After the abandonment, probably at the time of the Revolution, of the ferries between Warwick, Prudence and the Island of Rhode Island, there was no regular communication between Prudence and the mainland for a great many years. For varying periods the Providence and Newport steamboats made stops at Prudence, but the first modern attempt to establish a regular ferry was in 1906.

At that time it was a common custom for persons desiring a charter to obtain an unusued, or disused, charter and secure from the general assembly an amendment entirely changing the purpose of the charter. In accordance with this practice, Ralph W. Farnham and others, 18 April, 1906, secured an amendment to the charter of the Blue Mountain Coffee Company changing its name to the Prudence Island Ferry Company. A boat called the *Oriole* was purchased and made a few trips, but the project was soon abandoned. This was at about the time that Capt. Chase began to run his boat, the *Prudence*.

Capt. Halsey Chase says that in the seventies of the last century some of the farmers on Prudence Island hired a sailboat in Bristol, owned by Capt. John Allen of Warren, to make weekly, or semiweekly, trips, landing mostly at Potter's Cove.

PRUDENCE ISLAND TO BRISTOL

CHASE'S FERRY

According to Capt. Halsey Chase, his present ferry was started in 1904. At that time he was keeping a hotel on the island and the ferry was for the accommodation of his guests.

The first boat was an open gasoline launch named the *Kay.* His income the first year was $60. In 1906 he bought a catboat called the *Alice,* which he converted to a launch and renamed the *Prudence.* The boat made three trips each day. The northern part of Prudence belonged to Governor Joseph Wanton, was confiscated during the Revolution, and was purchased by John Brown of Providence. A part of this property descended to the Herreshoff family, the celebrated yacht builders

Miss Rebecca Chase, engineer of her father's ferry-boat, Prudence Island to Bristol. Photograph by *Providence Journal.*

of Bristol. Previous to 1909 the landing from Chase's boat had to be made by means of a skiff, but in that year the Herreshoffs built a wharf at the summer settlement on the east side of the island called Homestead, about half a mile north of Sand Point. Later another wharf was built just south of the light-house at which the ferry-boat made a landing. In 1910 Capt. Chase bought the *Arline*, formerly the property of General Charles R. Brayton, which he altered and renamed the *Harvest*, because his father and grandfather had a boat of that name in which they carried to the mainland the harvests of their fields. Until 1912 the ferry was operated only during the summer, but in that year Capt. Chase obtained a contract to carry the mail, which he continued to do until 1 July, 1921. During this period some sort of transportation had to be provided all through the year, though, for most of the time, during the winter, a small boat called the *Reliance* was used. The difficulties of winter transportation have been referred to in the section on "Ferries in Bad Weather". The landing place of this ferry in Bristol is at the foot of Church Street. The fare has been twenty-five cents except during the Great War when it was thirty cents. In 1918 Capt. Chase's daughter, Rebecca, obtained an engineer's license and has helped her father to run the boat. She is here shown on duty in the engine room.

PRUDENCE ISLAND TO BRISTOL

PRUDENCE ISLAND NAVIGATION COMPANY

As the summer residents increased in number, Capt. Chase's boat was unable to handle the traffic and, as he did not care to invest more in the ferry business, the residents of the island obtained a charter in January, 1921 and organized a company with the above title. The president is Adam C. Barnie and Charles A. Aldrich is the treasurer. The company purchased a boat called the *Madeleine* which they renamed the *Prudence*, which began her trips in the summer of 1921. Later in the year they purchased another boat, called the *Anna M.*, to be used on the winter service. Four or five trips daily each way are made by these boats. The fare is twenty-five cents, though trip tickets are sold at lower rates. These boats land in Bristol at the foot of State Street and they call at both landings on Prudence.

NEWPORT TO JAMESTOWN

CODDINGTON'S COVE TO NORTH FERRY ROAD

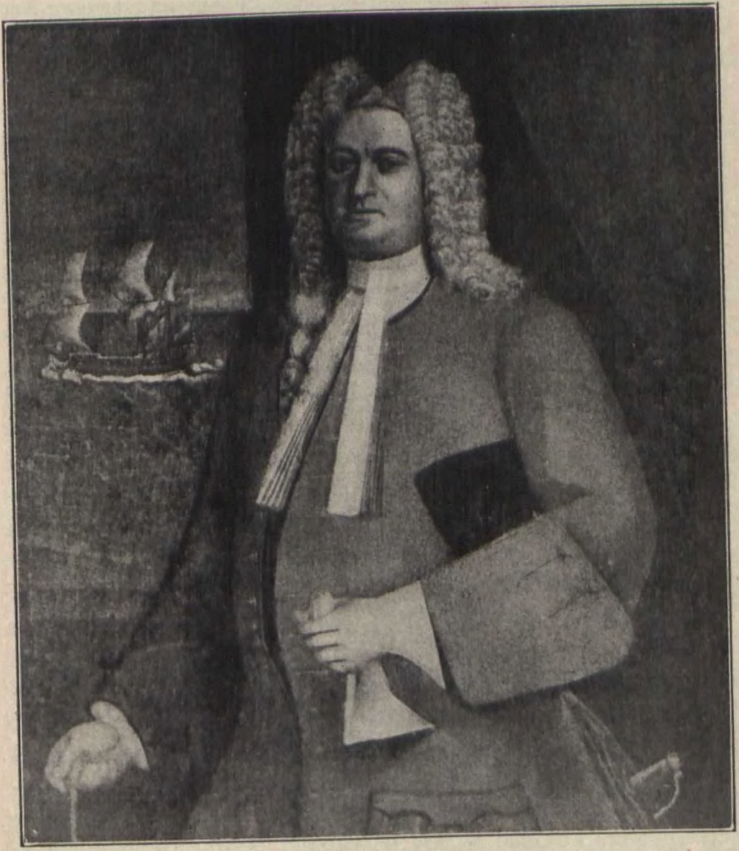
Under North Ferry we will refer to the traditions preserved by Rev. Daniel Goodwin concerning the ferry here under consideration. These traditions are very meagre, but we are inclined to believe that there is some truth in them. Additional testimony comes from Dr. Thomas W. Wood who says that there are the remains of an old wharf in the southwestern part of Coddington's Cove where it is sheltered by the point. He tells us that, when he was a boy, old boatmen and fishermen pointed this out to him as the landing place of the ferry to the North Ferry Road, or Amaziah's Lane, on Conanicut Island.

NEWPORT TO JAMESTOWN

THE POINT FERRY

In early days there was in Newport a cove of considerable size where the railroad station and yards now are, north of the present Long Wharf. The neck of land northwest of this cove was known as Easton's Point, or, as it soon came to be called, "The Point", a name which it holds to the present time. The southern extremity of The Point, extending south towards the line of the present Long Wharf, and then a little easterly was called Gravely Point. "The Point" was platted by its proprietors into lots of city size and, in the early part of the eighteenth century, became a thriving business and residential section of the town.

The general assembly, sitting in Warwick, 27 October, 1725, voted that a ferry be stated and settled at Easton's Point for the transportation of passengers and their wares to Jamestown and that it be under the same regulation as the other ferry before stated from Newport to Jamestown. The committee was not to lease the ferry until the person offering to hire the same be provided with a suitable conveniency for keeping it. No mention is made of the lessee of this ferry, but, from a petition of Benjamin Ellery, June, 1768, it is



Benjamin Ellery, wealthy merchant of Newport, born 1699, died 1746. He and his son William and grandson Benjamin were owners of The Point Ferry.

learned that the ferry established at The Point in 1725 had, since 1730, been in possession of the Ellery family. By a deed dated 26 April, 1730, we learn that Henry Stanton, shipwright, and his wife Mary, had purchased, 30 December, 1715, from the proprietors of Easton's Point, lots eleven and twelve and that they sold them, on the date of the deed, to Benjamin Ellery, together with a dwelling house and other buildings, wharf, pier, and ferry-boat. This renders it highly probable that Henry Stanton was the first lessee of the ferry and that he held it until its sale to Benjamin Ellery in 1730. This view is still further strengthened by a petition of Samuel Carr, the proprietor of the other ferry, to the general assembly in 1725. This petition is printed in the account of Carr's Ferry.

From a deed of these lots given by Freeman and Nancy Mayberry, 16 October, 1799, it is learned that this property was left by the Benjamin Ellery who purchased it from Stanton, to his son William Ellery. Benjamin Ellery made his will 2 July, 1743, and died in 1746. Reference has already been made in the section on Ferry-Boats, to the theft, in 1732, of the ferry-boat belonging to the ferry by an Indian man servant. Again, in October 1734, we hear of this ferry, when Benjamin Ellery and others petitioned the general assembly that the Great Bridge to The Point needed repairs because of the great traffic over the ferry. This was referred to in the section of "Ferry Traffic." In February 1737 there was a petition presented for paving the street leading to this ferry, all of which indicates the importance of this route. In November 1737 Benjamin Ellery, calling himself merchant and several of the ferrymen in Newport, Jamestown, and North Kingstown, petitioned the general assembly for an increase in ferry rates. This was the period of rapidly depreciating currency which rendered an increase in ferry rates imperative and they were, as a result of this petition, raised by the general assembly. Benjamin Ellery's will, which was probated 8 August, 1746, leaves to his son William his dwelling house at The Point, where he then lived, and the dwelling over against it to the south, then occupied by Grimbird, and the ferry house, with land, wharf, ferry place, warehouses and buildings, ferry-boat and out-wharf and warehouses thereon and wharf and warehouses adjoining. The lease of the ferry to William Ellery from his wharf on The Point in Newport to Jamestown was executed 9 September, 1747. It is one of the few leases preserved and is printed in full in the section on "Ferry Leases". David Green, who, with his son David, witnessed the signatures attached to the lease, was, at that time, the owner of a ferry in the opposite direction, from Jamestown to Newport, and probably to The Point. William Ellery, like his father, found an increase in ferry rates necessary and, in February, 1753, petitioned for such an increase. William Ellery died 15 March, 1764, and by his will, made 17 February, 1748, left to his son Benjamin his dwelling house and the house where Gimbert lived, his ferry-house, wharf, boat, other wharf and stores and buildings thereon at The Point. As was shown, when considering the relation of the opposite sides of the ferries, Benjamin Ellery was greatly annoyed by having incompetent persons operate the ferry from Jamestown to his wharf at The Point and, 17 June, 1768, he presented a petition to the general assembly asking for relief.

During the Revolution this ferry was suspended most of the time and the ferry house was, at one time, occupied by soldiers, for the general assembly, in May, 1776, ordered the removal of the troops from the ferry house on The Point, belonging to Mr. Benjamin Ellery, in order that the ferry might be kept open as usual. It probably was not kept open very long, owing to the return of the British.

The DesBarres map of 1776 shows the Ellery Ferry wharf in the location described in the deed of Henry Stanton to Benjamin Ellery in 1730. There is no doubt that the ferry was suspended during the long occupation of the town by the British, but when it was re-opened we do not know. There are references to this ferry in advertisements in the *Newport Mercury* for January 9, 1784, and July 24, 1788. Benjamin Ellery died 12 December, 1797, and his ferry property passed to his two children, Abraham Redwood Ellery and Martha

Redwood, the wife of Christopher Grant Champlain. On 27 November, 1798, Abraham Redwood Ellery sold to Christopher Grant Champlain his half of the ferry-boat, called the *Patty,* Clark Remington, master, of about thirteen tons and also half of the ferry-boat called the *Martin,* John Remington, of Jamestown, master, of about thirteen tons. The Champlains did not care to continue in the ferry business and, beginning 28 August, 1798, we find an advertisement in the *Newport Mercury* which ran for some time. It offered for sale The Point Ferry and also the corresponding ferry on the Conanicut side, including the two ferry-boats. The property at The Point was described as consisting of two wharves and a range of stores on each side, the ferry house and garden, and a house lot adjoining the Wanton Estate, 99 by 115 feet. On 5 August, 1799, the Champlains sold the ferry property to Freeman Mayberry for $27,000. This sale included lots on Easton's Point, Numbers eleven and twelve, with the wharves and warehouses and the ferry house occupied by Clark Remington and all the privileges belonging to The Point Ferry left to Martha Champlain by her father, Benjamin Ellery. On 16 October, 1799, Freeman and Nancy Mayberry sold the property to Abigail Bentley of Newport for $3,200, it being liable to certain conditions, including quit-rent to the proprietors of Easton's Point and especially to the conditions upon which the premises had been improved for the purpose of maintaining a ferry. In January of the next year Mayberry again obtained possession of this property. This was probably a mortgage transaction, though it does not appear so from the wording of the deed. According to the records, Freeborn Mayberry, 10 September, 1819, sold two lots on the westerly side of Washington Street, but there is no reference to a ferry.

How long the ferry continued and whether it continued at this place we do not know, but it was almost certainly in operation in June and October 1800, for at the date first mentioned, the ferry committee reported four boats on the Newport-Jamestown ferries and in October referred to the two boats at Jamestown and "the boats" in Newport. Mayberry, in 1802, purchased from J. J. Hazard a ferry privilege on Conanicut and it is possible that he may have operated both sides of the ferry. Thomas Hazard, in the *Jonny Cake Papers* refers to the Point Ferry as being in operation in 1805 or 1806 and tells a story in which he mentions "Free" Mayberry and refers to the ferry-boat being at Barton's wharf.

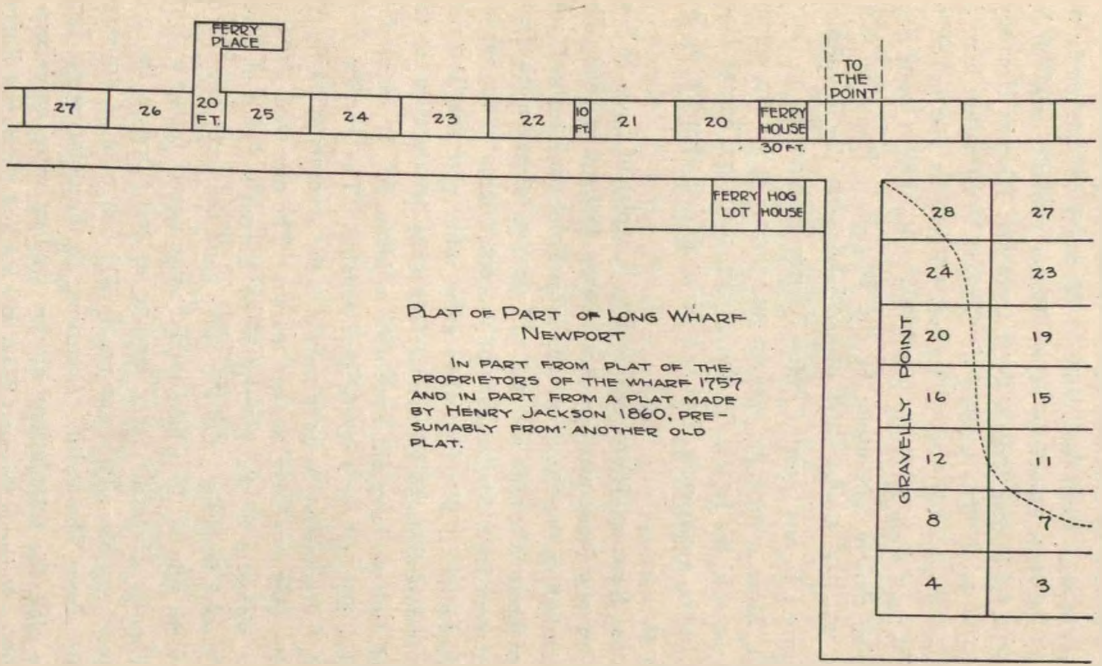
NEWPORT TO JAMESTOWN

LONG WHARF FERRY

It is said that reference to the Long Wharf in Newport appears on the records as early as 29 April, 1685. The proprietors came to an agreement with the town in 1702 and obtained the title to the wharf in 1739. The record book of the proprietors, beginning 9 October, 1739, is preserved in the office of the city clerk in Newport. The wharf was built during the next few years. In February 1745 the proprietors petitioned the general assembly for the privilege of keeping a ferry. This was granted and the lease was to begin at the expiration of those of the other two ferries in Newport and the ferry was to run to Jamestown. On 4 September, 1746, a committee of the proprietors was appointed "to consider of a proper place for a ferry wharf and in what manner the same be built." We hear no more of the ferry until 30 July, 1755, when Jonas Minturn asked permission to build a hog-sty over the town dock near ferry wharf. This was not granted. It is barely possible, however, that this reference is not to the Long Wharf Ferry but to Carr's Ferry. On 8 July, 1756, the proprietors of Long Wharf voted that Joseph Hammond, Jr. have the liberty of ferrying from The Long Wharf agreeable to the grant of the general assembly to the proprietors, until the proprietors shall order otherwise. This grant could have done Hammond little good, for, on July 19, the proprietors voted that the ferry lots on The Long Wharf, laid out for a ferry house and for the ferry place, be granted to Thomas Hazard for thirty years, he to pay five shillings a year and erect a dwelling house, thirty feet by twenty-two feet and a tee, or pier, for laying the boats to and landing and taking off people and creatures. Thomas Hazard was one of the proprietors of Long Wharf. In October of the same year John Hull of Jamestown obtained a license to operate a ferry from Jamestown to Long Wharf on the same terms as specified for Thomas Hazard. As Hazard was a man of some means, he doubtless hired a ferryman to sail his boats. On several occasions in 1763 and 1764 Griffen Barney, of Newport, appears in the court records, sometimes as ferryman and sometimes as inn holder. That Griffen Barney was ferryman for Thomas Hazard is practically certain. He represented Hazard at meetings of the proprietors of Long Wharf in March 1763 and 1764 and in September, 1766. On 24 September, 1766, the proprietors of Long Wharf appointed a committee, of which Barney was a member, to determine whether Hazard's lease required him to keep the gangway on the main wharf in repair and, six days later, it was voted that the twenty foot way to the ferry wharf adjoining The Long Wharf be repaired at the charge of the proprietors. It would appear that Hazard left Newport not long after this. At any rate, his last attendance at a meeting of the proprietors of Long Wharf was in March, 1765, and he was not in the list of proprietors in October, 1768. In 1775, when Hazard advertised his property for sale on Griffen Street, now Truro Street, he called himself of Scituate. On 15 April, 1768, the proprietors directed Griffen Barney to see that the streets on the wharf were kept clean and to pay all his rents to the treasurer. From this it may be assumed that he was then the tenant of the ferry wharf. When, 17 June 1768, Benjamin Ellery complained to the general assembly about the mismanagement of the Newport ferries, the other ferry proprietors, including Griffen Barney, were summoned to appear.

The only other reference to this ferry which we have found relates to Washington's visit to Newport in 1781. Stephens, in writing of this, says he landed at Barney's Ferry, corner of Long Wharf and Washington Street, then a flat sandy beach. Where he obtained this information we do not know. Perhaps it was from the *Newport Mercury* of that week, no copy of which is known to exist. Better evidence is given by Crowell. He quotes from a letter from Mr. Thomas Hornsby. The latter says, "The landing of General Washington here at the time in question, was at Barney's Ferry as you go on to Long Wharf from Gravelly Point, the Long Wharf itself having been mostly laid waste by the British." Probably none of the Newport ferries were so profitable after the Revolution as before. In any event, Griffen Barney soon moved to Dartmouth, Mass., where he was living, when, on 19 November, 1785, he sold his lot on Griffen Street, next to Thomas Hazard's, who, apparently, had not been able to dispose of his holdings.

At the Newport Historical Society is a plat of Long Wharf and Gravelly Point made by Rev. Henry Jackson in 1860. The part including the layout of Gravelly Point and a short portion of Long Wharf to the east and west, is taken exactly from a plat recorded in the records of the proprietors of the wharf, 19 December, 1757. Doubtless some other plat was in existence from which Jackson made his copy of the rest of the wharf, but we have not been able to locate it. It seems safe to consider Jackson's whole plat reliable. The portion of it which is interesting to us is shown in the accompanying figure. On this plat two ferry lots are shown. The one near Gravelly Point seems to fit the description of Barney's Ferry as given by Thomas Hornsby. On the other hand the ferry landing on the north side of the wharf would more nearly fit the account of Thomas Hazard's ferry landing as contained in the proprietor's records. This was nearly 200 feet west of the street leading from The Point. According to the notation on Jackson's plat, the foundations of this landing were in existence in 1860. Perhaps this was Hazard's landing place, but Barney was obliged to move to the south side of Long Wharf after the destruction wrought by the British.


FERRY PLACE
TO THE POINT
27
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FERRY LOT
HOG HOUSE
PLAT OF PART OF LONG WHARF NEWPORT
IN PART FROM PLAT OF THE PROPRIETORS OF THE WHARF 1757 AND IN PART FROM A PLAT MADE BY HENRY JACKSON 1860, PRESUMABLY FROM ANOTHER OLD PLAT.
GRAVELLY POINT
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Plat of part of Long Wharf, Newport.

NEWPORT TO JAMESTOWN

CARR'S FERRY

This ferry was sometimes called the Lower Ferry to distinguish it from the Point Ferry in the northern part of the town. There is little doubt that this was the first ferry established between Newport and Conanicut Island on which is situated the town of Jamestown. Those not familiar with Rhode Island should understand that the township of Jamestown includes besides Conanicut Island, only the small island, called Dutch Island, which was for the most uninhabited. In the old records the names Jamestown and Conanicut are used interchangeably as indeed they are in common parlance to-day. When this ferry was established we do not know, but very likely shortly after King Philip's War and perhaps even before. In 1675, when Capt. Church was summoned from Rehoboth to Wickford, just before the Great Swamp Fight, he states that he went the nearest way over the ferries, and, the wind being fair, he arrived safe in the evening. This would seem to mean that he went over Bristol Ferry and the Newport-Jamestown-Narragansett ferries, for, if he had gone over the Providence ferries the wind would have made little difference. There is a persistent tradition that the Carr family owned this ferry for 200 years until the steam ferry was established in 1873. This tradition seems to agree with the statement of Church. Peterson, in his *History of Rhode Island*, states that he was told by Robert R. Carr that the first grant of the ferry was made to Gov. Caleb Carr by the general assembly and that the ferry estate passed in direct line through John², Samuel³, Samuel⁴ and Samuel⁵ who was the father of Robert R. Carr. The latter gave a number of dates and said that at that time, presumably not long before 1853, the ferry was still in the possession of the grandchildren of Samuel⁵ Carr. Robert R. Carr was postmaster in Newport during Jackson's administration and died 12 May, 1872. We have been able to verify every statement of Robert R. Carr except the one that the general assembly granted a lease of this ferry to Gov. Carr and we are inclined to believe that this, also, is correct, though no mention has been found in the colonial records which are missing between 2 August, 1692, and 2 July, 1695. It is also true that no mention is made of the ferry in Gov. Carr's will, but he may very well have previously given it to his son John. The wording of the act of the general assembly in May, 1699, and given in full in the section relating to passes, makes it practically certain that ferries between Newport and Jamestown and between Jamestown and Kingstown were in operation before that date. Gov. Carr was drowned in 1695. He gave to his son John his dwelling house and his warehouse upon his wharf. Gov. Carr lived on the northerly side of what is now Mill Street and owned the wharf at the foot of the street where the ferry now is and where it probably was then and remained during all the intervening years. Gov. Carr was buried in the family burying ground near his residence where the Coddington School now stands. His remains were later removed to the family burial lot in Jamestown. In 1741 the street running eastward from Carr's ferry wharf (Mill Street) was called Carr's Lane and later Ferry Street. According to Peterson, the first market house on Ferry Wharf was built in 1733. The vote was that it be built at the head of the dock between the wharf of Samuel Carr and that of the heirs of Charles Tillinghast.

The first record of the granting of a license for this ferry was 4 May, 1700, to John^2 Carr. It is perhaps significant that the words "*the* ferry" were used, suggesting that the ferry was already in existence. In April, 1703, John Carr was required to carry certain officials without charge. There is on record an indenture made 20 April, 1704, between John Carr of Newport, ferryman, and Nathaniel Sheffield. In August, 1709, John Carr was again licensed to keep the ferry for seven years. John Carr died intestate in 1714 and his son, Samuel^3, 26 August, 1715, divided his estate, reserving to himself a portion of the wharf, though no mention was made of the ferry. This Samuel^3, on the third Monday in June, 1725, presented a petition to the general assembly in which he called himself Samuel Carr of Newport, ferryman. He alleges that he had purchased from Henry Stanton the latter's license for a ferry between Newport and Conanicut and that he understood that Stanton had asked to keep a ferry from The Point to Conanicut. This Carr objected to, saying that it was remote from the principal part of the town of Newport and that people would be inconvenienced by having it moved from the ancient place where it then was. This petition is printed in full below, together with the endorsements on the back. As in many other instances, these endorsements are the only evidence extant of the action taken by the general assembly on petitions. The meaning of this endorsement is not entirely clear, but, apparently, both Carr and Stanton obtained a ferry license with the privilege of landing at each other's wharves. Where the ferry was, the license for which Carr purchased from Stanton, does not appear.

> "To the Honble Genl Court of Assembly To be held att Newport within & for his Magestyes Colony of Rhode Island etc. on the Third Tuesday of June 1725
>
> The Petition of Samuell Carr of Newport Ferryman Humbly Showeth That your Petitionr for the Sum of one hundred five (fourty) (pounds) did purchase of Henry Stanton the Remainder of his Term which he had in the ferry between Newport and the Island of Conanicutt by Grant from the Genl Assembly of this Colony which Term Expires In the month of August next——And during the time your Petitionr hath had the said ferry hath diligently attended the same to the Genl Satisfaction of all persons and hath been att Great charge in makeing and keeping his Wharfe Boat and other things necessary for the well Transporting of passengers and their goods and Chattells over the said ferry—And hath further made provision for building a ferry house uppon the said wharfe for the ready Entertainment of Travellers—Yet as your said Petitionr Is informed the said Henry Stanton hath Petitioned this Honble Assembly to have a Grant of Keeping a ferry between the Point where

he dwells in Newport and sd Canonicutt a place Remote from the principall part of sd Town of Newport Which your Petitioner conceives ought not to be granted For the following Reasons 1st For That the principal part of said Newport will be much damnefyed thereby to have the ferry carryed from Itts Antient and Accustomed place to an other place soe Remote therefrom.

2d. For That your Petitionr and his father before him haveing served the publick by keeping sd for many years in the place where now Itt Is kept when the profit was but Small hopes this Honble Assembly will not think Itt Just or reasonable to permit a New ferry to be set up whereby the Custom of the said ferry will be rendered so Small as not to bear the Great and necessary charge of keeping good boats wharf and other suitable accommodations and attendance necessary in sd Service.

3d. For That the publick service will be damnefyed by devideing said ferry whereby the Income of both will be soe small that suitable boats attendce and accommodations cannot be maintained out of the same.

Your Petitioner Therefore humbly prayes That he may have a New and Sole Grant of sd ferry on Newport side to be kept In Itts Antient and Accustomed place for a longer time and That Whereas your Petitionr brings over a Great many Cattle and Sheep from Canonicutt (which is most propperly the duty of the ferry boat on the other side and which the owner there of hath hitherto taken the whole proffitt of) That Your Petitioner may have his proportion of the proffitt arriseing by the ferryage of sd Cattle & Sheep — And your Petitioner as In duty bound shall pray etc.

Samuel Carr"

Endorsements on Petition

"Once Read

That the opinion of the house is that Mr. Samuell Carr may have Liberty to Renew his lease of the ferry from

Newport to Jamestown in the place he now has from the Collony's Committy for Leasing the same.

Voted, Past to House of Mag.

Attest Wm. Hall Clerk

Concurr'd by Ordr

and the Commissiones for Letting out the Ferry agree with Carr as they shall think most Beneficial for the Country's Interest by maintaining a Boat or otherwise Landing People at the Point

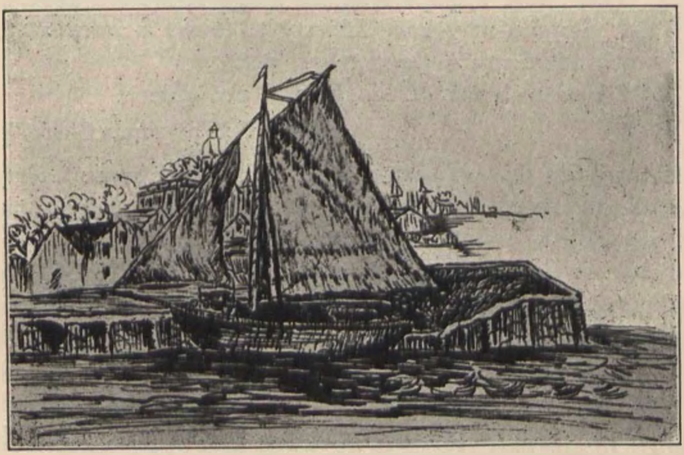
Rd Ward Recorder

This house concurs with the last proposition: provided that Stanton may have Liberty to keepe a ferry at the poynt and Land at Carrs wharf also

Past to house of Magistrates per order

Richard Waterman Clerke"

Although in this petition Samuel Carr called himself ferryman and did so again in 1737, he was also known as gunsmith and very likely followed this trade in the latter part of his life and hired others to sail his boat for him. He died of smallpox 19 June, 1739, and his daughter Waite died the same day and was buried with her father on Goat Island, where his tombstone was recently standing. By his will, Samuel Carr left his ferry to his two sons, Ebenezer and Samuel^4, and Samuel obtained control in 1758. In the agreement then made, this Samuel^4, son of the gunsmith, calls himself ferryman and we have also found references to him as ferryman in 1760, 1763, and 1768. The ferry was suspended during the occupation of the Island by the British. This Samuel^4 Carr died in Jamestown 2 September, 1796, and was buried there and, by his will, left to his son Samuel^5 his ferry house and wharf in Newport and his ferry-boat. This Samuel^5 was drowned in Newport 21 March, 1814. He had been to visit a sick uncle, Capt. John Carr, who lived on Washington Street and while returning along the causeway to Long Wharf he was blown off into the water and was drowned. On May 4, his inventory was filed and in it he was called ferryman. One of the items of the inventory was an old ferry-boat with very poor sails valued at $200. This Samuel Carr left six children among whom were Robert Robinson Carr, Samuel[6] Carr and Green Carr. In 1817 Green Carr sold to Samuel[6] Carr of Newport, merchant, one sixth part of the lots on Ferry Wharf received from his father Samuel, and one sixth of the ferry-boat. Although Robert R., and perhaps some of the other brothers and sisters, did not sell their interest in the ferry property to Samuel[6], it seems likely that the latter managed the ferry. He died 14 October, 1846, and 14 August, 1847, the widow Mercy and one of the daughters, sold to Samuel[7] Carr their own shares and the shares of the other daughter, deceased. On 11 October, 1847, Robert R. Carr sold to his nephew Samuel[7] Carr one sixth of the wharf property on both sides of Ferry Street and one sixth of the ferry-boat. This land he had received from his father Samuel[5]. The Samuel[7] Carr who made the aforesaid purchases was born 13 June, 1814, of Samuel[6] and Mercy, and died 7 May, 1890. In the first Newport directory, 1857, Samuel[7] Carr is recorded as a



Ferry-boat belonging to Samuel Carr of Newport at her wharf in that town, 1846. From sketch owned by Miss Susan B. Franklin of Newport.

grocer at No. 5 Ferry Wharf with his house at 40 Spring Street. At the time of his death he was called merchant. Like most of the Carrs he appears to have been a ferry owner and hired others to sail the boats. The ferry-boat shown in the Frontispiece belonged to him and at one time was sailed by Capt. Timothy Peckham. This Samuel Carr continued to be the owner of the ferry until the sailing boats were superseded by the steam ferry-boat in 1873. According to Job Ellis, one of the last men to sail Samuel Carr's boat was Job Caswell. Thus we are certain that this ferry was in possession of the Carr family for seven generations descending from father to son for a period of 173 years and probably for several years longer. It is worthy of note that members of the Carr family have had official connection with the management of the steam ferry company to the present time.

NEWPORT TO JAMESTOWN

THE HORSE BOAT FERRY

In October, 1827, Henry Bull and others were incorporated as the Narragansett Bay Company to operate steamboats between Newport and Jamestown. Nothing was done under this charter, and in June of the following year, George Engs and others petitioned the general assembly that the proprietors of the ferries between Newport and Jamestown and between Jamestown and South Kingstown be required to put at least one steam, or team boat, on each ferry and, also, one sailboat, or to permit the petitioners to establish ferries as aforesaid. In October, 1828, another charter was granted to the Narragansett Bay Company authorizing it to use either steamboats or horse boats. The capital was to be $30,000, the charter was to run for twenty years, and the ferry was to be in readiness within one year from the date of adjournment. There must be one boat on each ferry and three trips each way were to be made daily. It was, however, provided that the other four ferries might take the charter before February of the following year. This they did not do and the Narragansett Bay Company proceeded to establish a horse boat ferry. Where the wharf was on the Newport side we do not know, though in the *Newport Mercury* of 22 May, 1830, there is an advertisement by George Knowles on Chase's Wharf (between the Ferry and Horse Boat wharves). In June, 1829, as will be referred to in the account of the Ellery Ferry from Jamestown to Newport, the proprietor of that ferry sold his wharf in Jamestown to the horse boat company, but he was to have it again if that company should cease to operate its horse boat. This wharf was situated on the north side of the eastern terminus of "The Road from Ferry to Ferry", now known as Narragansett Avenue. Probably the horse boat was put on the ferry soon after the purchase of the wharf, but could not have continued long in operation for the wharf was reconveyed to Thomas R. Congdon 15 September, 1830.

Henry B. Tucker, of Jamestown, remembers his mother telling about crossing in the horse boat, which, she told him, was operated by horses treading on a great revolving disc. This was the way in which the horse boats at Bristol Ferry and Slade's Ferry were operated.

Jamestown to Newport

There were several ferries from Jamestown to Newport and, although they must have been designated colloquially by different names, it was rarely that they were so distinguished in official records, and this is one of the reasons that have made it so difficult to write a complete account of them. The first of these ferries to be discussed, and perhaps the first to be established, was the one between the end of Narragansett Avenue in Jamestown and Carr's Ferry wharf in Newport. This was sometimes known as the East Ferry, but might more definitely be called

Clarke's Ferry

Although there is no conclusive evidence that there was a licensed ferry at this point previous to 4 May, 1700, it is highly probable that boat owners were in the habit of transporting passengers and animals for hire and even operated the ferry regularly, though without a government franchise. This has been referred to in the account of Carr's Ferry from Newport to Jamestown. Indeed we know that Joseph Mowry of Jamestown carried Judge Sewall to Newport in September 1699 and that he entertained him at his house after the manner of ferrymen.

The first license that was granted for this ferry was on 4 May, 1700, to Thomas Winterton of Jamestown. The ferry was settled on Winterton for a period of seven years. The words "*the* ferry" are used in the record in such a way as to fit in with the theory that this was not a new ferry, but one already established, though not licensed. Winterton had a license to keep a house of entertainment in 1696, but the records, which appear to be far from complete, have no reference to such a license in 1700. Winterton did not long continue to be the proprietor of the ferry, for we find that in April, 1703, Jonathan Marsh had the franchise. Marsh died in 1704 and his will gave to his son William his ferry-boats on the east side of Jamestown and to his son Jonathan his ferry-boat on the west side of the island. There is no evidence that Marsh ever operated a ferry on the west side of Conanicut, though he might readily have done so, or he might have had his boat there temporarily for some other purpose.

No record has been found to show whether the sons of Jonathan Marsh operated the ferry, as there is no record of a license granted until August, 1709, when Robert Barker had the franchise. Earlier in the year Robert Barker and his wife had made objections to the layout of the road between the ferries. Robert Barker had married, 7 October, 1705, Phebe, the widow of Jonathan Marsh. She was previously the widow of Oliver Arnold and was the daughter of Thomas and Mary

Cook of Portsmouth. It is not improbable that Phebe Marsh operated the ferry until her marriage with Robert Barker and that Barker then did so until his death.

The next official reference to this ferry that has been found, was in an action of the general assembly on the last Tuesday in February 1728. It was then voted that Mr. Samuel Clarke, of Conanicut, provide and keep one other good ferry-boat and ferryman more than he now hath, to ply and tend the ferry from Jamestown to Newport to answer The Point boat during his lease; and to be ready in four months' time, and that the said ferryman and boat be under the same regulation as the other ferrymen and boats are; and, if said boat comes in to the old ferry place of the town she shall be obliged to call at The Point to take in passengers if The Point boat is out of the way. The ferry from "The Point" in Newport, to Jamestown had been established in 1725. This part of Newport was rapidly growing in importance and doubtless there was a demand on the part of the inhabitants of Jamestown for direct communication. This action was probably taken at this particular time because of a petition of David Green, 29 February, 1727-8, in which he asked liberty to build a wharf on the north side of the highway laid out for the use of the ferry and to have the privilege of operating a ferry. It is endorsed on the back "The petition was voted out." The petition alleged that Clarke's lease had five more years to run, from which it appears probable that Clarke had operated the ferry for at least two years, as the leases were usually for seven years, and perhaps he had the ferry for several years before that.

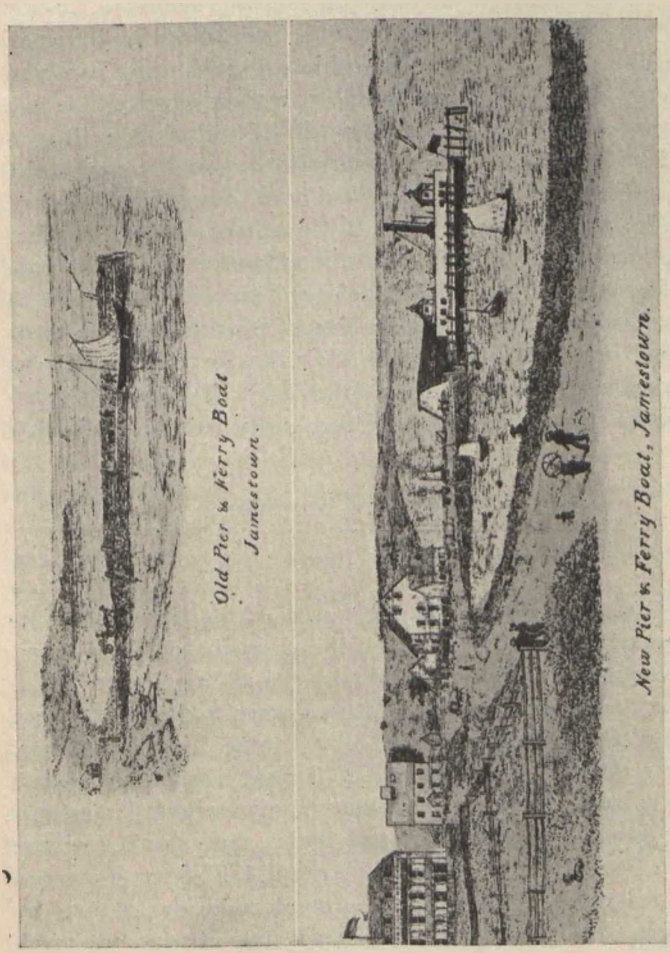
It is possible that Joseph Mowry may have had the ferry for a while. William Brenton was the owner of all that large tract in Jamestown lying south of the present Narragansett Avenue and east of Mackerel Cove and the road to Beaver Tail. Joseph Mowry was tenant of this property and later purchased it. In his inventory, which was filed 31 May, 1716, was mentioned, "one boat £50, the boat which was Phebe Barker's, and the old boat, in all £76". His granddaughter Mary, the daughter of Daniel Coggeshall, was the wife of Samuel

Clarke and to her he left the north part of his Rock Hall farm, bounded north and west on the highway, east on the sea, or harbor, and south on the land of John Hull, together with buildings and wharf. Perhaps it was the possession of this property which induced Samuel Clarke to go into the ferry business, in which he remained until 1751. It is in the highest degree probable that the first ferry was located on the southerly side of the eastern terminus of the present Narragansett Avenue, for from very early times this highway was called the road from ferry to ferry, and the ferry was located here, when, on 6 April, 1751, Samuel Clarke and his wife Mary deeded it to their son Joseph for love and affection and £500 current money, and he on the same day, for £3,000, old tenor, deeded it to John Remington, ferryman.

The action of the general assembly in 1728, referred to above, would indicate that previous to that time, Clarke ran his ferry-boat, presumably from Narragansett Avenue to Carr's wharf in Newport and that the general assembly required him to run another boat to The Point. Nothing was said about his having another landing place in Jamestown, but it is probable that he was later required to do this, for, in May, 1736, he presented a petition about it to the general assembly then sitting in Newport. In this petition he alleges that he finds the charge of keeping two houses and families too great and he asks that he be required to keep only one house and family. It was ordered that he need not keep more than one house and family for the use of the ferry "And that he keep two boats and attend as heretofore as has been customary. One of said boats to come to The Point and attend there and the other to the other part of the town". The general assembly again leased the ferry on the east side of Jamestown to Samuel Clarke, 20 June, 1740. In December of the same year the rates of ferriage over his ferry were regulated. In another petition to the general assembly in October, 1745, Clarke refers to the fact that, when requested, he built another boat and house at a cost of over £300. Where the second ferry house was located has not been determined. On 13 March, 1729, Clarke purchased eighty-five acres on the southerly side of Taylor's Point, but this would seem to be too near the old ferry for a second landing place.

When the Clarke's sold the ferry to John Remington in 1751, the deeds described the lot with pier and wharf as being one and one half feet east of Clarke's screw house and this reference to the screw house appears in all the transfers of the property up to the time of its sale to William H. Knowles in 1871. For a long time we had no idea what this "screw house" was. The manufacture of spermaceti was a flourishing industry of The Point in Newport during the period in which Samuel Clarke ran his ferry-boat to that place. An important part of a spermaceti manufactory is a powerful screw press, but that this was commonly called "a screw" we did not know until we came across an advertisement of the sale of one in the *Newport Mercury* for November 12, 1784. It seems probable, therefore, that Clarke's screw house was a place for the manufacture of spermaceti. The wharf and pier, above referred to, occupied substantially the site of Caswell's wharf which may now be seen on the southerly side of the eastern end of the present Narragansett Avenue. Samuel Clarke's deed to his son included "a certain lot of land and one mesuage thereon standing" the lot containing one acre and forty-seven rods. In a later deed this is called "a certain mesuage or dwelling house" and was situated a little west of the screw house and near the southwest corner of what is now Narragansett Avenue and Canonicus Avenue. The word "messuage", as it is properly spelled, was sometimes applied to a piece of land, but in this instance, as well as in others, it was applied to a dwelling. The deed also included the "Ferry boat called the wall boat with mast, bowsprit, boom, sails and rigging". Accompanying the deed is a plat which shows the screw house and other buildings, but is not easy to interpret, so far as the lot east of the screw house is concerned. At the first glance one would think that the drawing represents the pier and wharf, but if they were as large as indicated, it is most surprising. As to what a wall boat is, we have no idea.

After the death of John Remington the ferry property came into the hands of his sons, Stephen and Gershom, and 10 March, 1775, was sold by them to Samuel Slocum for $1,600, silver. Samuel Slocum was the son of Ebenezer Slocum who, in the early part of the century, had been the proprietor of the Conanicut side of the North Ferry to North Kingstown. On 19 March, 1785, Samuel Slocum, ferryman, sold the es-



Old Pier & Ferry Boat Jamestown.

New Pier & Ferry Boat, Jamestown.

From a map of Conanicut, published by Daniel Watson, 1875. The upper part shows the old pier which, in the lower portion, is concealed by the new pier. Plate loaned by Rhode Island Historical Society.

tate, with dwelling, wharf and boat, to Benjamin Reynolds for $1,900, silver, and 13 March, 1792, Benjamin and Sarah Reynolds sold the same property to Jonathan Hopkins for $1,900, silver. On 19 May, 1794, Jonathan Hopkins sold it to Christy Potter for $1,800 and the next year Potter sold it to Jonathan J. Hazard. On 28 May, 1802, Hazard sold it to Freeman Mayberry of Newport for $1,600. Mayberry had, 5 August, 1799, purchased The Point Ferry in Newport from Benjamin Ellery's heirs. Clarke's Ferry then passed through the hands of Thomas Dennis and Gold S. Silliman who disposed of it, 28 July, 1806, to Thomas R. Congdon for $1,000, but no boat is mentioned in the deed. Congdon had, in 1804, purchased from Joseph Allen the Ellery Ferry to The Point in Newport and he had also come into possession of the site of the Hull Ferry. On 9 March, 1833, the ferry property was purchased by Caleb F. Weaver for $7,000. This sale included the Clarke ferry property, the Ellery Ferry and the Hull ferry site.

Jamestown to Newport

Ellery's Ferry

David Greene, during the early part of the eighteenth century, was the owner of land on the east side of Jamestown, comprising a part of what is now known as the Greene Farm. He was anxious to become a ferry owner and several times petitioned the general assembly for a license, but was refused, probably through the influence of Samuel Clarke, proprietor of the existing ferry, who frequently represented Jamestown in the general assembly and was for a time speaker of the house. Greene's petition, 29 February, 1727-8, is preserved at the state house, but we have found no evidence that the ferry was ever established. The town was perhaps not much in sympathy with Greene, for, 17 September, 1727, it was voted that if another ferry be set up on the east side of the island, the deputies be directed to try and secure the benefit of it for the town, but there is no indication in the record as to just what the thrifty townspeople desired. Greene had been granted a ferry license on the west side of the island in 1727.

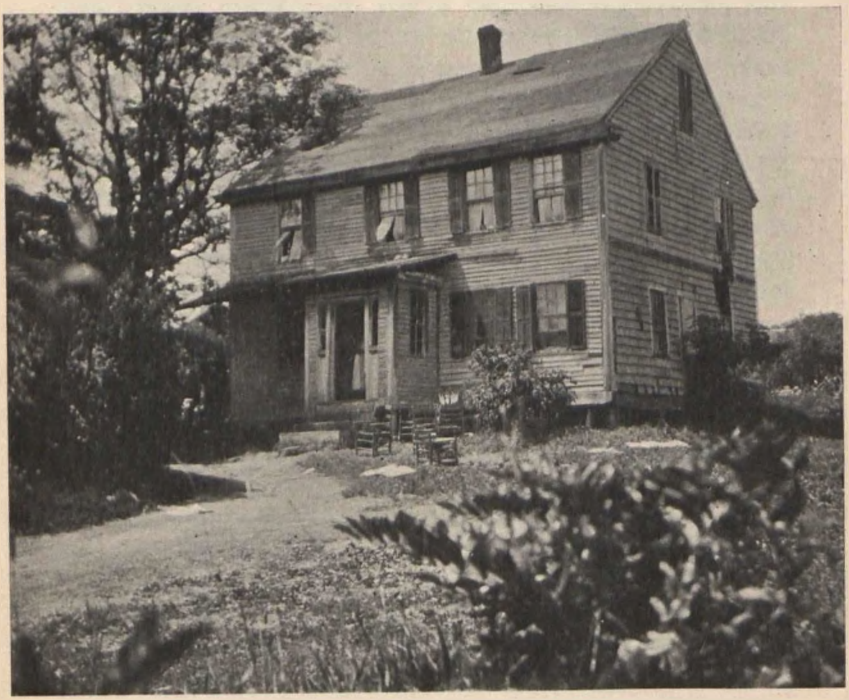
On 10 March, 1745-6, when Clarke was no longer in the general assembly, Greene again petitioned, saying that he had a good house on the east side of Jamestown for the accommodation of travelers and a good wharf for landing passengers and for laying a boat, that it was conveniently situated and that if he should be granted a license, he would provide a sufficient boat and keep the ferry equal to any in the colony. It was thereupon voted that he be permitted to set up a ferry from Jamestown to Newport and to begin at the expiration of Mr. Samuel Clarke's present lease of said other ferry. There is on file in the office of the secretary of state the original lease of the ferry to David Greene for seven years dated 9 September, 1747.

On 6 July, 1752, David and Sarah Greene sold their ferry to William Martin, who, just previously, had been in possession of one of the ferries on the west side of the island, running to North and South Kingstown. The purchase price was £1,000 bills of credit. The property consisted of a four acre lot at the northwest corner of the road leading from ferry to ferry, and the four rod road leading to the watering place. This is the site now occupied by the Bay View House, and at that time contained the ferry house, a blacksmith shop and hen house. The sale included a beach lot situated on the opposite side of the four rod road along which it extended forty-two feet. There was also a ferry-boat with mast, bowsprit, boom, sail and rigging. Martin agreed, as has been referred to, to transport Greene's family, free, so long as they should live. In West's New England Almanack for 1769 Martin's tavern in Jamestown is mentioned.

On 16 April, 1770, William Martin and his wife Eunice conveyed this property to Benjamin Ellery of Newport, merchant. Ellery had, for a long time, owned the ferry in Newport which ran to this landing and by this purchase became proprietor of both terminals.

While the British fleet was in Newport in the summer of

1775, the passage of the ferry-boats was a good deal interfered with, though they continued to run, with more or less regularity, but on December 10, a party of British landed on Conanicut and burnt fifteen houses, including two belonging to Benjamin Ellery and two belonging to the widow Franklin, who kept the ferry on the west side. They also seriously wounded John Martin, eighty years old, who was standing in his doorway unarmed. He was the father of the William Martin referred to above and had himself formerly owned the ferry on the west side. It is probable that after this date none of these ferries were operated during the war, except the El-



Ellery Ferry House, Jamestown, called quite new in 1797, now standing just northwest of the Bay View House, from the site of which it was moved. Plate loaned by Rhode Island Historical Society.

lery ferry, which seems to have been re-established for a short time in 1776.

When Benjamin Ellery died, 12 December, 1797, the ferry passed to his son, Abraham Redwood Ellery, and his daughter, Martha Redwood Champlain, wife of Christopher Grant Champlain. On 7 November, 1798, Abraham Redwood Ellery transferred his share in the property to his sister Martha. On 2 September, 1799, the Champlains sold to Joseph Allen of Newport the "Ellery Conanicut" ferry as previously described.

On 16 April, 1804, Joseph and Mary Allen of Jamestown sold this ferry property for $4.600 to Thomas R. Congdon of North Kingstown. A portion of the wharf was sold by Congdon, 18 June, 1829, to the Narragansett Bay Company, the company which was preparing to operate a horse boat. On the failure of the horse boat, the wharf was reconveyed to Congdon and, with his other ferry property, was sold to Caleb F. Weaver, 9 March, 1833. Weaver left it to his wife, Phebe R. She married James Hamilton Clarke and 26 March, 1860, they sold the property to Philip Caswell, Jr. Caswell employed Job Ellis to sail his boat, for which he received thirty dollars

Captain Job Ellis, late of Jamestown, the last man to sail the ferry-boats from Jamestown to Newport. Died October, 1921. Plate loaned by Rhode Island Historical Society.

per month and house rent. Caswell, however, looked closely after the business and, according to William B. Franklin, was accustomed to stand on Thames Street in Newport before the departure of his boat, watching for passengers, and crying "way, way". Philip and Elizabeth Caswell sold the ferry to William H. Knowles 25 March, 1871. Knowles raised the price of ferriage to such an exorbitant figure that the agitation for a steam ferry was renewed and the present company was organized in 1872.

JAMESTOWN TO NEWPORT

HULL'S FERRY

In 1756 Captain John Hull of Jamestown, in a petition to the general assembly, stated that there was a ferry from Long Wharf in Newport for which there was no mate boat and he prayed for the liberty of setting up a ferry from his wharf in Jamestown to Newport. The petition was granted. This ferry was located just south of the Watering Place. Before the island was cleared and drained there were springs and perhaps a rivulet just north of the end of the present board walk. This was reserved as a watering place by the proprietors and a four rod road was laid out along the shore, northward from the road leading across the island from ferry to ferry.

John Hull and his wife Damaris sold this property to William Hazard, 13 December, 1760, for £1,500 and 29 January, 1761, William Hazard sold the property to Oliver Hazard for £10,000 lawful money. On 18 November, 1773, Oliver Hazard sold to William Tuck of Newport the land, dwelling, wharf and ferry-boat. Undoubtedly this ferry was suspended during the Revolution and we have found no evidence that it was ever re-established. The property had passed through several hands and was finally purchased by Thomas R. Congdon who was the owner of both the Clarke and the Ellery ferries and perhaps feared that the Hull property was too good a location for a competitor.

JAMESTOWN TO NEWPORT

JAMESTOWN AND NEWPORT FERRY COMPANY

The first charter of the Narragansett Bay Company in 1827 permitted the use of steam power between Newport and Jamestown, but horse power was actually employed. In 1854 an attempt was again made to secure steam transportation between Newport, Conanicut and the mainland to the west. In January of that year Robert Watson and others petitioned the general assembly to be incorporated as the Newport and Jamestown Steam Ferry Company. We have not found that the charter was granted.

After the sail ferry was sold to William H. Knowles, 25 March, 1871, it is said that the ferriage was raised to one dollar per person. This renewed the agitation for better transportation. At a town meeting held in Jamestown 3 April, 1872, it was voted to ask the general assembly for authority to establish ferries between Jamestown and Newport and to build, or purchase a wharf and boat, and a committee was appointed to report on the financial aspects of the problem. Accordingly the general assembly, on April 11, passed an act authorizing the town of Jamestown to establish a ferry between Jamestown and Newport and between Jamestown and South Kingstown and to raise money by taxation, or to hire it, and to fix the rates of ferriage. On April 22, the town asked for authority to issue bonds and, April 26, this was granted. The town held other meetings May 2 and August 1 and 22, 1872, and voted to establish the ferry and to subscribe for sixty percent of the capital stock. A committee was appointed to act for the town, consisting of Jeremiah Hazard, George C. Carr and Fred N. Cottrell. The town treasurer was authorized to issue bonds not to exceed $12,000. The Jamestown and Newport Steam Ferry Association was organized and it was voted to ask for incorporation when the town would transfer its interest to the new company. On 6 July, 1872, land was purchased from John Howland at the present location of the ferry on the east side of the island.

The first boat on the new ferry was built in Newburyport at a cost of $20,960. She was of the ordinary type of double ended steam ferry-boat and her hull was eighty feet long, twenty-two feet four inches wide and eight feet deep. The wharf in Jamestown cost $8,000 and the wharf in Newport $1,500. The *Jamestown* arrived in Newport April 10, and made her first trip May 12 and after that made five trips daily each way. She was advertised to stop at Fort Adams. The ferry-boat now (1923) makes eighteen trips daily, each way. One of the pilot houses from the *Jamestown* may now be seen on the lawn of a house in Jamestown on the south side of Narragansett Avenue near the top of the hill as one goes up from the west ferry. In order to accommodate the boat, Peckham's part of the old ferry wharf in Newport was widened to forty-five feet and the dock between the ferry wharf and Peckham's wharf was filled in.

At the May session, 1873, the Jamestown and Newport Ferry Company was chartered with a capital of $100,000 to operate a ferry between Jamestown and Newport. The town was authorized to subscribe for so much stock as the electors might vote at town meeting. The incorporators were the town's committee, then consisting of George C. Carr, Frederick H. Cottrell, and their successors in said office and John Eldred, Robert H. Watson, Benjamin Bateman, John Howland and Benjamin Cottrell. On 1 April, 1874, the town voted that, whereas the town had subscribed for 180 shares of the ferry stock, the treasurer shall issue $18,000 of bonds. This company took over the affairs of the old company which apparently was never legally incorporated.

After a few years there began to be a demand for a larger and better boat and 27 January, 1886, at a special town meeting, action was taken towards hiring money for this purpose. The steamer *Conanicut* was purchased at a cost of $30,000. This vessel was built in Wilmington and was 125 feet long. According to the *Newport Mercury* of 2 July, 1887, she was advertised to make her trips on and after July 1 of that year. In 1888 an amendment to the charter of the company was secured, authorizing it to operate boats between Jamestown and Narragansett Ferry. This authority it did not possess under the charter of 1873, though the town had it under the act of 11 April, 1872. The *Jamestown* was then transferred to the west side of the island.

In 1896, the general assembly authorized the town of Jamestown to hire money to aid the ferry company to obtain another boat. The *Beaver Tail* was purchased the same year to run between Jamestown and South Kingstown.

Although the profits of the ferry did not appear to be excessive, a competing company, known as the Narragansett Transportation Company, was organized under a charter granted 6 March, 1906.

This company owned four boats operating between Saunderstown, Jamestown and Newport, but did not prove successful and, early in 1911, it appeared that its property would soon be on the market. At the January session of the general assembly the charter of the Jamestown and Newport Ferry Company was again amended to permit it to operate ferries between Jamestown and North, as well as South, Kingstown and Narragansett. An exclusive franchise was granted and the capital stock was increased to $150,000. The town was required to take enough stock to maintain a majority of the shares. The property of the Narragansett Transportation Company was purchased in March, 1911. Included in the purchase were the boats and the ferry slip on the east side of Jamestown and the ferry slip in Saunderstown. On 11 May, 1911, the ferry company mortgaged its property to the town, including the wharves and land in Newport, Jamestown and Saunderstown and the steam ferry-boats *Conanicut*, *Jamestown*, and *Narragansett*. The *Conanicut* was burned in the ferry slip at Jamestown on the morning of 20 September, 1914, and the *Narragansett* took her place. The company had also purchased the ferry-boat, *John A. Saunders*. The *Conanicut* was repaired and is still in service. During the World War the *Narragansett* was purchased by the United States government and is now running as a ferry-boat between Goat Island and Newport.

Owing to the inability of the *Beaver Tail* to handle the summer traffic, it was determined to secure a larger boat and in October 1923 the ferry-boat *Hugenot* was purchased in Bridgeport and she was put on the route that month. She is said to carry twenty-eight automobiles.

The affairs of the company have always been managed by a board of five directors, three of whom are elected by the town and the town has always held a majority of the stock. Though, of course, it was hoped that this venture would prove a profitable investment, the chief object of the company has been to furnish adequate transportation. Few dividends have been paid, the first being in 1900. On 8 April, 1905, the town meeting instructed its directors to put the company's receipts into a sinking fund instead of into dividends.

With the present state of American morality it is exceedingly difficult to conduct a municipal enterprise efficiently and economically. This ferry company which is, in reality, a municipal undertaking, has had its full share of criticism, some of which is noted in the records of the town meetings. In June, 1883, owing to dissatisfaction, the town voted to sell its stock to any who would give bond to operate the ferry all the year around for ten years, but there was no taker. In April, 1901, a committee was appointed to investigate the accounts of the ferry company. At the town meeting held in April, 1920, a committee was appointed to examine the accounts of the company, which reported in October that the method of keeping the books was far from satisfactory. Owing to the rapid development of automobile traffic, complaints about the size of the ferry-boats became frequent and for a few years it has often happened in the summer time that automobiles are unable to get on the boats and have to wait over a trip. At a town meeting held 5 November, 1921, the ferry company asked for a loan of $188,000 to furnish ferry equipment, which was refused.

In the spring of 1923 an attempt was made to secure the purchase and operation of the ferries by the state, just as 175 years ago, owing to high costs of operation and unsatisfactory management, the colony purchased the ferries between Jamestown and Kingstown. So now, for substantially the same reasons, the state is urged to purchase these ferries and to operate them in connection with its system of public roads, thus carrying out the idea of the old English law, that a ferry is a part of a public highway. On 14 May, 1923, a joint special committee was appointed by the general assembly to consider this proposition.

JAMESTOWN TO NEWPORT

GORTON'S FERRY

The present Eldred Avenue formerly extended from the shore on the west side of the island of Conanicut, where the old North Ferry was located, directly across to the east shore, where tradition tells us there was a ferry to Newport. This tradition will be discussed in the account of the North Ferry. At present the highway does not extend to either shore. That there was a modern ferry at the eastern terminus of this road was first brought to our attention by Dr. Thomas W. Wood, Jr. of Boston who was born and passed most of his early life in Newport.

On 22 June, 1857, Amaziah K. Gorton, who had come to Jamestown from Warwick, purchased thirty acres on the north side of the cross-road and east of the main road. Amaziah Gorton's daughter married William H. Severance the present town clerk of Jamestown and from him we learn that Gorton began to make regular ferry trips, about 1860, from the wharf at the eastern end of the cross-road, on which he lived, to the ferry wharf in Newport. The cross-road at that time was called Amaziah's Lane, but was later given the name Eldred Avenue. Gorton's boat was a sloop named the *Twilight* and his only regular trips to Newport were on Saturday, though he carried freight at other times to Newport and other places on the bay. He gave up the business in 1882. The wharves in Jamestown are in excellent condition.

The Canal Project

For over half a century there was talk of a canal through Conanicut Island. The object was to do away with the land passage across the island and, by constructing a railroad to connect with the Stonington Road, to greatly shorten the time between Newport and New York. Even after the Wickford Line was established, it was thought, by some, that the proposed canal would facilitate travel sufficiently to warrant its construction.

In 1854 a charter was granted to the Narragansett, Conanicut and Newport Steam Ferry Company. The incorporators were leading citizens of Newport, Jamestown and South Kingstown. The company was authorized to construct a canal across the island, operate ferry-boats and to construct a railroad from the landing place on the west shore to connect with the Stonington Railroad. Nothing was accomplished under this charter. In 1887 another company was chartered and organized, known as the Newport and New York Rapid Transit Company. This company made a survey and filed its plans with the clerk of the court, in North Kingstown. The canal was to extend from Potters Cove, following substantially the course of the creek through the salt marsh to Dutch Island Harbor. The landing place was to be a little below Saunderstown and the railroad was to connect with the Narragansett Pier Railroad just south of Tower Hill. This plan also was never developed.

Even as late as 1894 the general assembly passed a resolution urging congress to provide for a canal across Conanicut Island, but still travelers to and from Newport and the west shore of the bay have to make their way across this island over "the road from ferry to ferry" just as they have ever since 1709, though the automobile has taken the place of the saddle horse.

Jamestown to South Kingstown

By the Hessians it was known as Dutch Island Ferry.

This ferry was often referred to, especially by the inhabitants of Jamestown, as the West Ferry and it was also occasionally called Narragansett Ferry, though this name was more often given to the ferry in the opposite direction from South Kingstown to Jamestown. Like the opposite ferry, it was, at times, called Franklin's Ferry. William B. Franklin of Newport, who is a descendant of Abel Franklin, at one time the owner of both ferries, has much information about these ferries and about the Franklin family which so long owned them.

The first evidence we find of the establishment of this ferry was when it was settled on Josiah Arnold of Conanicut, 25 March, 1700. The records reads:

"Voted, Whereas Mr. Josias Arnold, of Conanicut, alias Jamestown, presented a petition, dated the 25th of March, 1700, that the Horse Ferry between the said Jamestown and Narragansett shore might be settled on him for some years * * * .

Be it enacted * * * That the said Ferry be settled on the said Josias Arnold * * * and that no person shall by his act prejudice the said Arnold in his employ as aforesaid by keeping a publick Ferry."

It seems very probable that this was not the first ferry to be established at this point. The fact that Arnold petitioned to keep *the* horse ferry would suggest that there was already such a ferry, though not licensed to Arnold, and perhaps not licensed at all. Moreover the ferry in the opposite direction had been established by the Smiths in 1695 and it seems likely that the corresponding ferry would have been set up before five years had elapsed.

On 20 March, 1701-2, Josiah Arnold was summoned before the town council of Jamestown, because complaint was made that he sold strong drink without a license. Arnold denied that he had done any such thing and alleged that the complaint was the result of spite. When asked if he thought that he had a right to sell strong drink because he held a license to operate the ferry, he said no. He was then granted a license to sell strong drink until the third Thursday in May.

It would appear that the inhabitants of the island had already become disturbed by the fact that the licenses granted for the ferries in 1700 were exclusive franchises and they had begun to discuss the meaning of the terms of the franchise, for, at this meeting, Arnold was asked whether his license would debar the inhabitants of their old privilege and they be forced to come down to his house. He said no, but every man could transport himself and neighbor without putting himself to so much trouble to come to his house, but no one could ferry persons where his ferry is kept to his prejudice. The islanders were not satisfied with this, but, as was shown in the section on "Exclusive Franchise", secured legislation in 1702 confirming their rights.

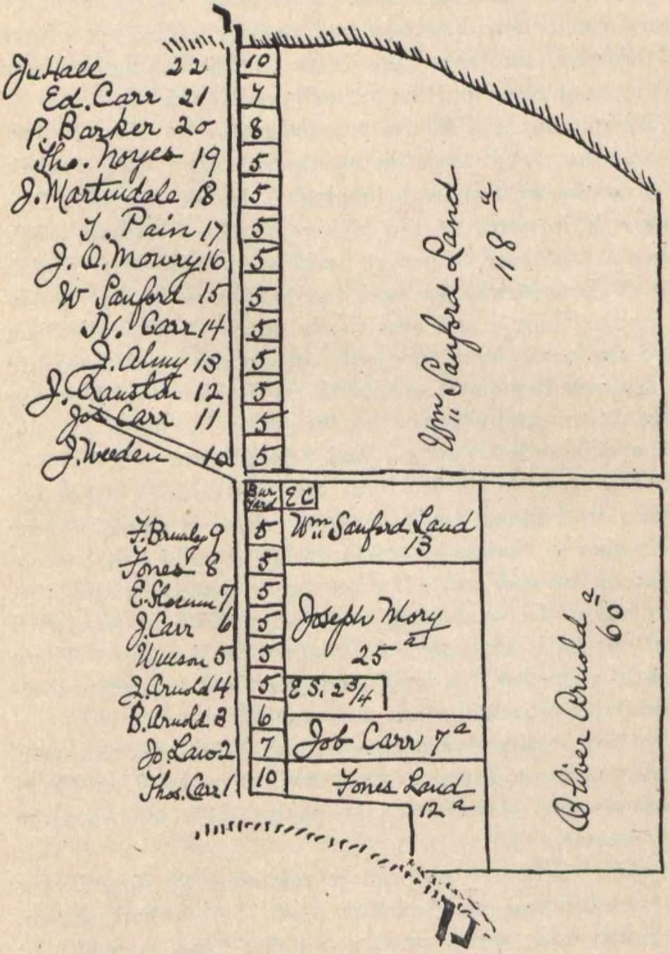
The question of the location of this ferry is of considerable interest. The fact that both the town council and Capt. Arnold referred to travelers going to his house in order to be ferried across, would strongly suggest that the ferry was located near Arnold's house. At this time Josiah Arnold doubtless lived on his farm at Beaver Head, which was left to him by his father Benedict, 24 December, 1677. If this was so, the ferry landing was probably in the little sandy cove just south of Fox Hill and directly west of Arnold's house. The present ferry is located nearly a mile from Arnold's house by road, and that the ferry was there at the period under consideration is highly improbable, as we cannot believe that there could be any question of travelers being required to go down to Arnold's house and then return over the same road to the ferry. If this supposition as to the first location of the ferry is correct, we have some evidence as to when the change was made to the present landing. In March, 1708-9, the proprietors voted to divide the "township" and appointed a committee to lay out a highway on its southerly side. In May this committee made a report to the general assembly that it was unable to lay out this highway owing to the objections that were made and it asked the assembly to lay it out, "so that the Publick benefit of the Ferries might be for the good of her Majesties subjects". In August, 1709, the general assembly ordered the proprietors to lay out a four rod highway from sea to sea for her Majesty's service. This was the highway later known as "the road from ferry to ferry", or, at times, as Ferry Lane, now Narragansett Avenue. The use of the plural "Ferries" indicates that the west ferry landing had been moved to its present location as early as May, 1709.

On 8 September, 1709, the proprietors laid out the "township" and the plat of this layout shows a two and one half acre lot on the west shore belonging to Josiah Arnold. This lot was a little north of the highway. On 3 August, 1707, Benedict Arnold, of Newport, sold to his brother, Josiah Arnold of Jamestown, two and one half acres in the "township" bounded north and east partly on the land of William Sanford and partly by a "common or overplush lott there laid out to Francis Brindley" and south on the four rod highway laid out "from the Eastern to the Western ferry of said Town" and bounded west on land belonging to said brother, Josiah, according to the draft of the "township". Although the above description is not perfectly clear, it would appear that previous to September 1709 Josiah Arnold had become possessed of two and one half acres on the shore near the present location of the west ferry and that in 1707 he purchased two and one half acres more of his brother Benedict. These two pieces composed the ferry land described in many subsequent deeds as containing four and one half acres.

On the last Wednesday in August, 1709 the general assembly voted that Capt. Josiah Arnold shall have the West Ferry at Jamestown for seven years, he paying £4 a year into the general treasury.

On 4 June, 1712, the proprietors rescinded the first layout of the township and made another plat. This is here shown. In the action then taken it was voted that Capt. Arnold's lot might be laid out next to his wharf. Herman Moll's map of 1715 shows the post road running straight across the island where it is now located.

The next reference to the ferry is in the will of Josiah Arnold dated 23 September, 1721, and probated 23 February,


Jn. Hall 22
Ed. Carr 21
P. Barker 20
Tho. Noyes 19
J. Martindale 18
T. Pain 17
J. O. Mowry 16
W Sanford 15
N. Carr 14
J. Almy 13
J. Clarke 12
Jos Carr 11
J. Weeden 10
10
7
8
5
5
5
5
5
5
5
5
5
5
Wm Sanford Land
118a
Bur Yard
EC
F. Brinley 9
Fones 8
E. Slocum 7
J. Carr 6
Wilson 5
J. Arnold 4
B. Arnold 3
Jo. Law 2
Thos. Carr 1
5
5
5
5
5
5
6
7
10
Wm Sanford Land
13
Joseph Mory
25a
E S. 2 3/4
Job Carr 7a
Fones Land
12a
Oliver Arnold
60a

Plat of the "township," Jamestown, as laid out in 1712. The wharf and pier at the right (west) were for Josiah Arnold's Ferry. The wharf and pier to the left (east) were probably used by John Hull, 1756.

1725. In this he leaves to his five youngest daughters the profits of the new ferry-boat and pier on the west side of Jamestown. To his sons, Benedict and Josiah, he leaves land in Jamestown where the ferry is now kept with ferry-boat, pier, housing, and etc. When the youngest daughter is eighteen they are to pay to the daughters £300 equally divided. He also specifically leaves to the two sons township lot 22. These township lots were a row of twenty-two lots, each containing about an acre, and extending along the north side of the highway from ferry to ferry. Lot No. 1 was on the east side and lot 22 was the last lot on the west side, situated on the shore and connecting the two and one half acre lot with the highway. The will further provides that "so long as my said Children or Legal Representatives of any of them to whome the aforesaid Feary in this my will is given to, that Passengers shall have free Liberty who are Passing said feary either from Jamestown to Kingstown, or from Kingstown to Jamestown, to be landed on, or taken off, the Shores of my said son Benedict Arnold and Josiah Arnold Lands by me in this my will given them and to pass through their Said Land To or from the sd. Boats as hath been Customary always Taking Care to pass where they may do Least damage and the way be Suitable to Pass."

It is probable that after the death of Josiah Arnold in 1725, or, perhaps, even before his death, the lease of the ferry was granted to his son Benedict, for in May, 1725, the general assembly voted that the lease of the ferry to Benedict Arnold made by Capt. Nichols and Lieut. Coddington be declared void and of no effect. Apparently, however, he again gained possession, for, in May 1727, it was alleged that "Benedict Arnold of Jamestown to whom the Committee appointed for the Leasing of Ferries gave a Lease for the Sole Profit and Privilege of carrying for Hire from the West Side of Jamestown to North and South Kingstown hath not of Late complyed with the Terms and Conditions of sd. Lease by Providing and keeping up Good and Convenient Pierce or Wharf for the Landing * * Passengers as has been heretofore kept in sd. Place and was so farr from giving this Assembly Satisfaction in sd. affair and providing another Boat as by sd. Lease is expressed when Thereunto required that sd. Benedict Arnold did contemptuously neglect and refuse to wait on This Assembly or to produce to Them his aforesd. Lease as by Them required for their Jurisdiction in order to a better Regulation of sd. Ferry."

As a result of Arnold's attitude the general assembly enacted that there be forthwith another boat and ferry place appointed and erected on the said west side of Jamestown and the privilege of keeping this ferry was conferred on David Greene of Jamestown, who was authorized to transport passengers, or their creatures, to North, or South Kingstown, as such persons shall present and require, on the same terms as other ferrymen and on an equal footing with Benedict Arnold, provided Greene supply himself with a boat, pier and other conveniences and in every way comply with the law in regard to the leasing of ferries. We have no knowledge as to whether Greene did, or did not, establish such a competing ferry.

It is probable that not long after the death of Capt. Josiah Arnold this ferry property came into the possession of Benjamin Sheffield as tenant. On 16 January, 1727, Edward and James Carr sold to Benedict Arnold township lot No. 21, which was described as bounded west on land in possession of Benjamin Sheffield. This land held by Sheffield was township lot 22, left by Josiah Arnold to his sons as referred to above. Benjamin Sheffield had married the widow Damaris Northup, who was the daughter of Oliver Arnold, brother of Capt. Josiah Arnold. On Oliver's death in 1697 the "Triangular Farm" situated between the ferry road, the road to Beaver Tail and that part of Dutch Island harbor known as Eel Pond, or Eel Cove, or Sheffield Cove, fell to Damaris Northup, later wife of Benjamin Sheffield. In this way Sheffield became interested in the land on the south side of the ferry road on the west shore, both as owner and tenant. According to the will of Benedict Arnold, son of Capt. Josiah Arnold, dated 1 May, 1733, Benjamin Sheffield then lived on township lot 22 and lot 21 was also in his possession. By this will Benedict gave to his brother Josiah his right, left by his father, in the ferry-house, land, wharf, boat and piers, now in possession of Benjamin Sheffield. During this period Sheffield was, from time to time, licensed to keep a house of entertainment. It is doubtful whether Sheffield himself sailed the boats, for he is called joyner in a deed of 1732 and the Franklins, Remingtons and Martins, who lived near by, were, at one time or another, designated as ferrymen and later became ferry owners, and quite likely sailed Sheffield's boats. On 2 October, 1736, Benjamin Sheffield became the owner of the ferry property by purchase from Josiah Arnold, son of Capt. Josiah. The land now consisted of the two and one half acres first bought by Capt. Josiah Arnold, township lot 22 laid out to him, and lot 21 purchased by Benedict and sold by him to his brother. This deed to Sheffield conveyed also two houses, buildings, wharves and piers. This is the first time that two wharves and piers have been mentioned at this place, but they are from now on frequently referred to up to the time of the Revolution and, for a part of this period, were owned by different persons and were designated as the North and South Ferries, thus constituting two distinct ferries at this location. Why or when these two ferries were established we do not know. It is likely, however, that the second landing was built when Benedict Arnold began to run boats to North Kingstown as well as to South Kingstown. When this was, is uncertain, but in 1727 his lease permitted him to do this. The matter is further referred to in connection with the North Ferry.

As has been stated, Benjamin Sheffield, in consideration of the purchase of the two ferries as above, agreed to give free ferriage to Josiah Arnold and his family.

This was the period when the ferry business was suffering severely from depreciation of the currency and the ferry owners were constantly striving to secure an increase in rates. On 2 November, 1737, Benjamin Sheffield petitioned the general assembly for an increase in rates, alleging that he had kept a ferry on the west side of Jamestown for many years and that the rates of ferriage were too low, as the prices of everything had risen greatly. He also stated that his ferry was not so profitable as those in the opposite direction, from the main to Jamestown and from Jamestown to Newport. We have other evidence that the traffic towards Newport was greater than in the opposite direction, chiefly on account of the transportation of live stock to the Newport market and for exportation.

On 14 March, 1743-4, Benjamin Sheffield of Jamestown, yeoman, sold to Thomas Eldred, mariner, of Newport, the four and one half acres of ferry property with dwelling houses and two wharves and two ferry-boats. On 17 August, 1747, Eldred sold the property to John Martin and the next February John and Phebe Martin sold it to their son William.

The operation of these ferries became very unsatisfactory and the colony determined to purchase them and, in 1748, a committee was appointed for this purpose. This subject was discussed in the section on "Government Ownership". The period of government ownership was short-lived and, 25 October, 1750, a committee, appointed for that purpose, sold the two ferry properties on the west side of the island. Abel Franklin bought the southernmost of the two ferries and Stephen Wilcox, the northern one. Franklin's lot contained three acres and forty rods and was bounded on the bay on the west, and the road on the south. Abel Franklin had, 16 April, 1750, purchased a half interest in the Smith ferry from South Kingstown to Jamestown. He had been a ferryman, though, so far as we know, not a ferry owner, in Jamestown as early as 1728 and had kept a house of entertainment, so often connected with the ferry business, as early as 24 May, 1724. The Wilcox lot contained the remainder of the four and one half acre lot as it belonged to the Arnolds and Sheffields, and must have been shaped like the letter "L" so as to afford access to the highway east of Franklin. Stephen Wilcox in 1747 had the management of the North Ferry in North Kingstown which ran to John Martin's wharf in Jamestown. By this purchase he became the owner of the ferry plying in the opposite direction to the one he formerly managed. Franklin could not pay the full amount for his lot and was allowed one year's time without interest, and gave his bond for £3,400. Apparently the full amount was not paid, at least until 1755, at which time Franklin still owed £76 interest on his note.

On 26 February, 1753, the committee appointed to lease the ferries reported that it offered leases to the owners of the ferries there present, who refused to take them, and it then leased them to Joshua Bill, Nicholas Northup and William Martin. The ferries, the licenses of which were refused, were not named, but it is quite likely that the above named two ferries were among them, for these ferries had not proved very profitable and the men who ventured to lease them had had experience in ferry business between Conanicut Island and the west shore.

On 3 April, 1755, Stephen Wilcox sold his ferry to Benjamin Nichols of East Greenwich and 23 April, 1759, Benjamin Nichols, now of Jamestown, sold the ferry to (George Franklin) who was the son of Abel. Abel Franklin had removed to South Kingstown where he died, 3 March, 1758, and left the southernmost of the two ferries on the west side of Jamestown to his son George, so that George, by his purchase from Nichols, became possessed of both ferries.

George Franklin, by his will, dated 30 October, 1764 and recorded January 1768, left to his son Gershom the north ferry place and the right to a driftway from the main road to said ferry place below the bank, and to his sons John and George, the south ferry place. He also left to his son, Abel, a ten acre lot on the shore south of the ferry road which he had bought of Benjamin Sheffield, but only on condition that Abel should not set up a ferry. He also left to his widow Mary so much of the south ferry house as she needed.

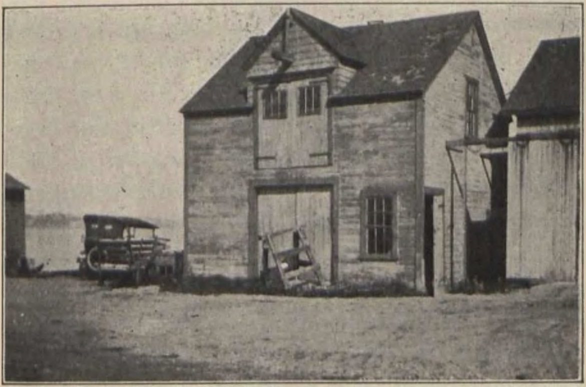
On 1 August, 1773, Gershom Franklin sold to Mary Franklin, widow, one quarter of an acre and the North Ferry wharf and right in the driftway and also the ferry-boat belonging to the North Ferry. The Revolution soon broke out and the widow Franklin's troubles during that period have been narrated in the section on "Ferries in War Time".

After the close of the war a dispute arose between Mrs. Franklin and her brother-in-law, John Franklin, the proprietor of the ferry in the opposite direction from South Kingstown to Jamestown. As has elsewhere been shown, there was more traffic, particularly in live stock, towards Newport than away from that town. This made the receipts of John Franklin's ferry greater than those of his sister-in-law, Mary. On 24 August, 1780, Mary Franklin presented a petition to the general assembly in which she alleged that it had been the custom to divide the ferriage of drift creatures brought over in their boats and she desired an act to make this custom a law. This was referred to the next session and John Franklin was summoned to be present. A committee seems to have been appointed which made a report 23 November, 1781, but the matter dragged until 1782, when on the report of the committee, it was enacted that Mary Franklin should have one quarter of the ferriage of all cattle, sheep, hogs, and calves that her boat shall carry from John's wharf to Jamestown and John should have one quarter of all the ferriage of all such animals carried by his boat from Mary's wharf to South Kingstown. This arrangement was probably satisfactory to all parties, for in June, 1809, the general assembly provided that it should continue in force with John Almy, who was then the possessor of the Jamestown side of the ferry, to whom it was sold 17 February, 1794, for $2,900 silver by John Franklin, ferryman and George Franklin, both of Jamestown and Lydia wife of John and Phebe, wife of George, and Mary the mother of John and George. The sale included five acres more or less with dwelling house, wharf, pier and boat. On 8 October, 1810, John C. and Sarah Almy sold the property to Smith Cottrell of South Kingstown for $6,000. On 12 January, 1819, Smith Cottrell and his wife Susannah sold the ferry to Joseph Congdon and Nathaniel Cottrell of Jamestown and Benjamin Stanton, William Greene and Daniel Stanton of South Kingstown, and shortly after, Joseph Congdon bought out the others.

After the death of Joseph Congdon the ferry was sold by his heirs to Isaac E. Howland of Jamestown in 1847.

The committee on ferries had found considerable fault, in its report to the general assembly, as to the manner in which this ferry had been operated, but expressed the opinion that Mr. Howland was an enterprising man and would probably manage it properly.

Howland obtained possession of more land on the south side of the road, so that, when he sold the property, 21 February, 1855, to William Spooner for $4,500, it contained fourteen acres. The next year William Spooner sold it to Thomas D. Spooner. On 4 November, 1866, the estate was sold to Benjamin C. Gardiner. In 1869 the commissioners of ferries reported that this ferry was owned by Senator Gardiner, but was kept by Mr. Peters who was also the boatman. On 23 March, 1871 Gardiner, now of South Kingstown, sold to Isaac Bowen Briggs of Jamestown the west ferry property together with the boats and tackle. Briggs operated the ferry for five or six years. He hired men to sail the boat for him, Christian Louth, Jack Watson and a man named McManus. The boatman lived in a small house on the wharf shown in the illustration. The Briggs lived in the ferry house, a little to



Ferryman's house now standing on the wharf, west side of Jamestown.

the east and shown under "Taggart's Ferry". The ell of this house was the waiting room in which tobacco, cigars and other things were sold. This house was built by Thomas Spooner. The old ferry house, a gambrel roof house, and probably built by the Franklins after the Revolution, was a few steps nearer the shore and in front of the well shown in the picture of the Briggs ferry house. These facts were obtained from Mrs. Gill, daughter of Isaac Bowen Briggs, whose son, William Gill was, until recently, manager of the Jamestown and Newport Ferry Company.

For twelve or fifteen years no boat was operated from this side of the ferry. On 7 July, 1888, the steam ferry-boat *Jamestown* began to make trips between the west side of the island and the South Ferry landing. In 1895 the *Jamestown* made her terminus at Saunderstown, stopping at the South Ferry, and the next year the *Beaver Tail* took the place of the *Jamestown* and no longer stopped at the South Ferry.

In 1906 a rival concern, the Narragansett Transportation Company, tried to prevent the boats of the old company from landing at the Saunderstown slip, but was unsuccessful and the Newport and Jamestown Ferry Company still continues to make Saunderstown its terminus.

Sometimes, when business has demanded it, the ferry-boats have made stops at Dutch Island. During the construction of the fortifications on Dutch Island and during its military occupation in the World War, stops were frequent, but at other times they were only occasionally made.

South Kingstown to Jamestown

This was most often called the South Ferry, but was known at various times as Smith's Ferry, the Ferry at Wesquage, Narragansett Ferry, the West Ferry, the Ferry at Boston Neck, Franklin's Ferry, Cottrell's Ferry and Eaton's Ferry.

John and Jeremiah Smith of Prudence Island, 21 February, 1692, purchased of the Winthrops more than a square mile of land extending from Narragansett Bay to Pettaquamscut

River. This was, at the time, in the "tenure and occupation of one James Sweet". This they divided by a line through the centre where the road now is from the South Ferry to the river. John Smith had the north half and Jeremiah Smith had the south half. When the division was made, 3 January, 1695-6, there was a landing place on the south division. On the same date the Smiths entered into an agreement about keeping the ferry which has been referred to in the section on "Receipts from Ferry Traffic". No record has been found when the ferry was actually set up, but it is probable that it was immediately, as the Smiths seemed to have made all their preparations. Judge Sewall writes of crossing the ferry to Narragansett in 1699. Indeed it is not unlikely that there was a ferry here before the Smiths purchased the property. There was certainly a landing place and there must have been quite a little travel between the mainland and the islands. James Sweet, who was tenant of the land, may have been ready to take people across when it was demanded. Where his landing was we do not know. It was not where the present landing is, for that is on John Smith's portion, while the original landing place was on Jeremiah Smith's, perhaps nearer where the government wharf now is. This would have been a better place than south of the point, where the water is shoal.

The first record found of a license for the ferry is in August, 1709, when the general assembly granted the ferry at Boston Neck in Kingstown to John Smith and Jeremiah Smith for seven years at £4 per year. On 30 June, 1712, the general assembly, after inquiry, found that some of the ferry keepers had neglected and refused to comply with the terms of the act granting the licenses, and voted that the ferry between Kingstown and Jamestown should be stated on the Smiths and William Gardner. A committee was appointed to see that the ferry regulations were enforced. In February, 1714, the Smiths presented a petition to the general assembly relating to the ferry and the assembly, after taking the matter into consideration and finding that the Smiths had complied with the demands of the committee, voted that they should have the whole privilege and benefit of the ferry, notwithstanding grants made to William Gardner and that said Gardner forthwith desist transporting passengers over the ferry.

As has been referred to under "Ferry Roads", 19 June, 1716, the Smiths laid out a road from the South Ferry to Narrow River. The plat of Jeremiah Smith's land, made in 1720, shows the eastern half of this road laid out in John Smith's land along his southern boundary. It then turns into Jeremiah's land and proceeds along his northern boundary. The will of Jeremiah Smith, dated at Prudence Island 19 March, 1715-6, probated 11 April, 1720, gave to his two sons, Ephraim and Ebenezer, the ferry, with the ferry house. He also gave to his son Ephraim the north side of the "house where he now lives" and to Ebenezer the south part. The property was entailed. A plat was made of this property, 27 September, 1720, which is now in the possession of William Davis Miller. It is noted on the plat that the point, beach, ferry place and the low land below the bank were left undivided, to be an equal privilege between them both. A portion of the plat is shown under Ferry Landings, on which may be seen the landing, the ferry house, the road and the dwelling house. John Smith, whose will was probated 8 February, 1730, left to his son John his whole right in the ferry and after him, to his two sons, John and William, and after them to their natural heirs forever. In August, 1738, John and Ebenezer Smith, yoemen, and Jonathan Nichols, ferryman, all of South Kingstown, petitioned for an increase of ferriage. They allege "That their ferry has gained the preference, both in respect of good attention and conveniency and for the better entertaining of travelers". They had built a new ferry house at a cost of several hundred pounds. It was stated that Nichols faithfully discharged his duties in managing the ferry and had lately purchased a large and new boat at his own cost. The ferry had been in the Smith family for over forty years, but they now began to dispose of it. On 30 May, 1739, Ebenezer Smith, Jr. and Ephraim Smith sold to Jeffrey Watson one quarter of the ferry property and half the dwelling, stable, freight boat and ferry-boat. This Jeffrey Watson married, 29 November, 1732, Bathsheba, daughter of John Smith, Jr. Watson purchased land at various times from the Smiths, included in which was five acres bought of Ebenezer Smith, Jr., 8 February, 1739. This lot was bounded east on the bay and was a short distance south of the ferry and was perhaps where Watson intended to build a house, but there is no evidence that he ever did so. He kept a diary which is probably in existence, though we have not been able to find it. According to Dr. Goodwin, who once had the diary in his possession, Watson lived on the ferry farm and kept the ferry. As stated in the diary, Francis Willet, who owned the farm next north of John Smith, found fault one day with the way in which the ferry was conducted, at which Watson indignantly gave up the ferry and moved to another farm which he owned. This was probably in 1742. Apparently it was soon discovered that the Smiths had no right to dispose of this property, as it was entailed by the will of Jeremiah Smith. Consequently Ebenezer Smith and Ebenezer Smith, Jr. petitioned the general assembly that they thought that they owned in fee simple 190 acres in South Kingstown, with one quarter of the ferry place, but they found that it was made an estate tail by the unskillfulness of the scribe who wrote Jeremiah Smith's will. They asked to have the entail docked, as the estate was heavily mortgaged and they must sell, and were given liberty to bring a writ for that purpose. Doubtless the entail was docked, for 4 July, 1741, Ebenezer Smith sold to Jeffrey Watson for £4,000 current money, sixty-nine acres, bounded west on the salt river, also eight and one half acres bounded east on the bay, north on Ephraim Smith and south and west on Ebenezer Smith, and one quarter of the land and beach for the ferry, one quarter of the old dwelling, wharf, piers, yards and privileges and one half of the new dwelling, stable and buildings, and one half of the ferry-boat and freight boat. On 5 March, 1742, Watson bought two acres more of Ebenezer Smith, bounded on the bay. From this time, for one hundred years, or more, the proprietors of this ferry ran a freight boat as well as a ferry-boat. It will be noted from the above that, in 1738, Jonathan Nichols, who was then associated with the Smiths, had built a large new ferry-boat and that a new ferry house had been constructed at a cost of several hundred pounds. Probably shortly after this Nichols withdrew and Ephraim and Ebenezer Smith purchased the ferry-boat. Watson held the property only from 30 May, 1739, to 22 March, 1742, when he sold it to Joshua Bill. In this deed he refers to the warehouse connected with the ferry. Capt. Joshua Bill had formerly kept a house of entertainment in Jamestown. On 5 September, 1745, he purchased from Ephraim Smith, for £900, another quarter part of the ferry property, but nothing is said about the new dwelling, or the boats. On the same day that Ephraim Smith sold the ferry to Joshua Bill, he gave the latter a bond, in the sum of £10,000, that he would not build a wharf, or pier, between the ferry place of John Smith and Joshua Bill and the land of Jeffrey Watson. Evidently Capt. Bill did not propose to run any risk of competition.

In February, 1747-8, John Gardner, who owned land just south of the Smiths, complained of the way in which the ferry was managed and obtained permission to run a ferry from his own wharf (see Gardner's Ferry).

On 16 April, 1750, John Smith and Mercy his wife, and John Smith, Jr. and Susanna and William Smith, for £2,000 current money, sold to Abel Franklin of Jamestown one half part of the land for the use of the ferry, half of the new dwelling, the old dwelling, stable, warehouse, wharf, piers, yards and ferry-boat. Abel Franklin had been a ferryman in Jamestown as early as 1728 and, 25 October, 1750, he purchased from the colony one of the two ferries on the west side of Jamestown. It is probable that Joshua Bill continued to operate the ferry in South Kingstown for, in August of that year, the general assembly directed the attorney general to take action against him because he had broken his contract for the lease of the ferry. This was the period when, owing to the depreciation of the currency, there was considerable difficulty in leasing the ferries. Nevertheless, Joshua Bill did, on

26 February, 1753, take a lease of this ferry. Bill, however, soon tired of the ferry business and had leased, or let, his share in the ferry to one John Steadman and, 17 July 1754, Joshua Bill and his wife Phebe, for £6,000 current money, sold to John Franklin of Newport, mariner, their interest in the ferry property purchased of Jeffrey Watson and Ephraim Smith and the two boats belonging to Joshua Bill, one called the freight boat and the other called the ferry-boat, now in possession of John Steadman. On the same day Bill transferred to Franklin an agreement and bond given by Ephraim Smith not to build a wharf between Bill's land and Watson's land. John Franklin was the son of Abel Franklin who, a few years before, had purchased the other half of the ferry from Ephraim Smith's heirs. We do not know when Abel Franklin moved from Jamestown to South Kingstown, but he was a resident of the latter town when he made his will, 31 December, 1755. Very likely it was when his son John made the purchase from Joshua Bill. It is also likely that John moved to South Kingstown and took up the management of the ferry at that time. Abel Franklin, 24 January, 1755, purchased ten acres from Jeffrey Watson bounded north on Ephraim Smith, east on the bay and south and west on John Gardner. When Abel died in 1758 he left by will, dated 31 December, 1755, his half of the ferry to John and also the land which Abel had purchased of Jeffrey Watson. John thus became possessed of the whole of the ferry from South Kingstown to Jamestown. His brother George by the will of his father received the ferry from Jamestown to South Kingstown. On March 10 and 11, 1758, Sarah, the widow of Abel Franklin, relinquished her right of dower to all her sons.

At this time the ferry property consisted simply of the landing place, ferry house and other buildings and a small amount of land around them. John Franklin, now the sole owner, also held about ten acres on the shore a short distance to the south and he at once began to add to his real estate holdings. He purchased of Ephraim Smith, 9 June, 1758, three acres of the shore south of the ferry place. This was the pebbly beach where the mill formerly was and where the government wharf now is. On 28 March, 1759, he purchased of Ephraim Smith, Jr. about sixty acres with dwelling house. This made a symmetrical lot extending up the hill beyond the burial ground and contained about seventy acres. On 12 April, 1770, he bought of Thomas Smith about twenty-eight acres on the shore on the north side of the road. All this formed what was long known as the South Ferry Farm.

John Franklin was continually borrowing money on this property and half a dozen mortgages are recorded between 1759 and 1773. In 1764 Franklin, being in need of money to repair his wharf at the ferry, obtained permission from the general assembly to raise £300 lawful money by means of a lottery. He alleged that he had been at great expense to keep the wharf in order and that all his pains had proved fruitless. He believed that if an addition of about forty feet should be carried out from his pier, it would effectually secure the wharf and would be of great service to vessels coming from sea in bad weather.

On 1 May, 1773, John Franklin and his wife Hannah mortgaged the ferry property, including the ferry-boat called the *Hawk*, to Amos Gardner for $8,000 silver. This was by a "deed poll" which provided that on, or before 21 November, 1777, he could redeem the same. Gardner brought suit against Franklin in 1783, obtained judgment and was put in possession of the property by the sheriff 25 March, 1785.

The following survey of the property made the same day shows of what it consisted and also into what poor condition a public utility could fall in a post war period when in bankrupt hands. We can recall similar misfortunes to common carriers after the World War. The original of this paper is in possession of William Davis Miller.

So. Kingstown, 25 March, 1785.

We the subscribers being appointed to view the Ferry Boat Wharves, Stores & other Buildings belonging to the Ferry & Farm taken possession of by Mr. Amos Gardner late the Property of Mr. John Franklin, find it in the following order—Ferry Boat Main Sail 2 aft leaches new the other in good repair new Bolt-rope suppose it about half worn in the whole. Fore Sail rather more than two thirds worn no holes in the Fore Sail running & standing Rigging & Blocks sufficient in good Order except the Top lift fall which is much worn, Mast good, Hull in good repair for an old Boat. South Wharf one small breach & wants repairing at South end. North Wharf in good Order. Pound good except the Gate which wants mending & one Hinge wanting Store on the North Wharf with Portion in the middle fire place in the North end & one fire place in the Chamber & a good Oven, Roof & Sides Battened all in good Order almost new, Smoke House Necessary House & Hen House in good Order Shed covered with Straw, Dwelling House in good repair except not lathed & Plastered over head in the Bar Room the Garret Floors which wants Boards Roof in good repair for an old House sides Battened few Clapboards on the North end Cellars in good Order. Windows 25 squars Glass wanting & part two Window Sashes worn out no Glass in the South Garret Window the other in good repair, The House on the West end of Farm occupied by I Gardner much out of repair the Floors & Doors much worn Garret Floor deficient the East end of the House as far as the Chimney taken away 84 Squars Glass in the House Windows Sashes & Clapboards of little value Roof in good repair, double Gate leading to the Ferry Garden Gate & etc. in good repair seven hundred & ninety five rails, two hundred & sixty eight Stakes thirty seven Bars sixteen Bar-posts on the Premises five hundred & fifty one Trees of sundry sorts on the Premises the Wells on the Farm in good tenantable repair.

Jno Gardiner
Saml Helme
Elihu Champlin

In January, 1787, John Franklin, then of Newport, brought an action in the supreme court to recover the property on the payment of his debts to Gardner. He won his suit and paid over to Gardner £3,871.16.2 and 3 farthings as determined by the masters in chancery, and execution was granted 1 January, 1788. In the account was included loss of the rents of the farm and premises during the time Gardner had possession, amounting to £420 lawful money. The injury sustained by the ferry-boat in her hull, rigging etc. amounted to £30. While this last case was in court, 7 April, 1787, John Franklin of Newport, for £4.200 lawful money, sold to Stephen Pettis of Voluntown, Conn., the ferry farm with two dwellings and all other privileges, but no reference is made to the ferry. Amos Gardner also on 11 December, 1787, for $10,000 sold his right and title to the ferry farm and the ferry-boat to Rowland Brown, Samuel Freebody, John Gardner, Ezekiel Gardner, Jr., Rowland Robinson, Lydia Champlain and Benjamin Gardner.

Like most ferrymen Franklin entertained travelers in the ferry house and for many years "Franklin's" is referred to in the almanacs as the place where travelers might be entertained at Narragansett Ferry. The name appears in the American Almanack for 1763 and in some almanac every year from 1765 to 1781, and in Anderson's Almanack in 1789 and in 1791. It may be suspected that these last two entries are errors, as we have found no other evidence that John Franklin either owned or operated the ferry after he sold it in 1787.

The ferry certainly could not have been operated during at least a part of the Revolution and the French map elsewhere referred to, designates the buildings occupied as a hospital as "Mons. Abandonnees" (abandoned houses).

As has been shown, John Franklin, even before the law suit was decided, sold the ferry property to Stephen Pettis of Voluntown. No deed from Pettis has been found. It is possible that the title after all was found not to be valid and that it was really vested in the persons to whom Amos Gardner sold it in 1797. Certainly in the later part of 1797 most of them transferred their rights in the ferry for substantial sums of money to Peleg Gardner and he obtained deeds from the last of them 24 April, 1800.

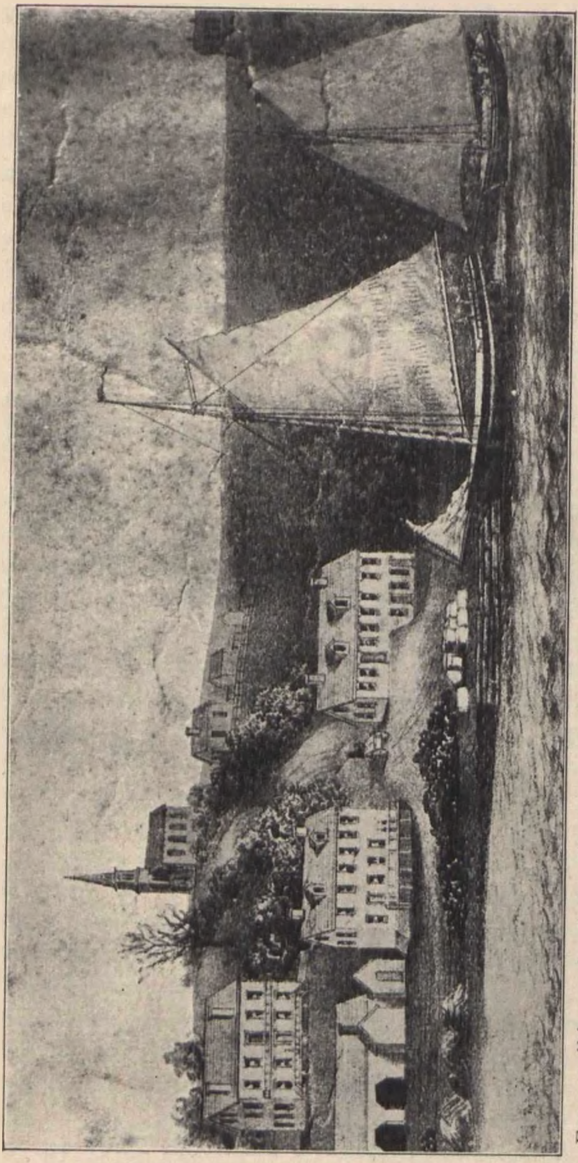
Thus in 1797 the ferry farm, with the buildings and ferry-boat came into the possession of Peleg Gardner. This Peleg was only distantly related to Amos, the former owner. In 1808 Peleg Gardner petitioned the general assembly that a certain act respecting ferriage at the South Ferry be repealed, or explained. This was the act passed in November 1781 which allowed Mary Franklin to receive a certain percentage of the ferriage on cattle transported by her brother-in-law, John Franklin. In 1808 Mary's side of the ferry in Jamestown was owned by John Almy and John Franklin's side of the ferry in South Kingstown was owned by Peleg Gardner. The latter objected to the requirement that he should pay over a part of his receipts for transporting cattle to the opposite side. Gardner argued that when the former agreement was reached, Amos Gardner, then the real owner of the South Kingstown side of the ferry, was deprived of its possession by John Franklin and had no notice of the pending arrangement. Peleg Gardner claimed that, though his ferry might have more traffic than the opposite ferry, he was put to greater expense because of the more exposed position of his landing, and because he was obliged to maintain a pound for live stock. He presented affidavits from Joseph N. Austin, Philip Caswell and Benjamin Robinson, all of South Kingstown, to show that his allegations were true. Robinson and Austin said that the "boating" of the cattle often amounted to more than the ferriage. On account of the undertow stronger "fasts" were needed and Robinson had seen the lines break and both boats go on the beach at one time. From Robinson we learn that he, at one time, lived at the ferry and probably operated it, for he says that he had to board his own ferryman all the time, and Almy's ferryman three quarters of the time. When he conferred with Almy about this, the latter agreed that each should pay for his own ferryman and that Robinson should keep all the "drift money". The matter was referred to a committee and on its recommendation in June, 1809, it was voted that the act of

1781, relating to the division of ferriage should continue in force. Gardner is reported as entertaining travelers at his house one mile west of Narragansett Ferry in 1815. He died in 1818 and by his will, dated 7 July, 1817, left two thirds of the ferry farm to his son, Ezekiel W. Gardner, in whose possession it then was, together with two thirds of the sloop, scow, wharves, etc. The other third went to his daughter, Isabel, who transferred her share to her brother, 13 October, 1818, for the sum of $3,333.33.

On 20 April, 1819, Ezekiel W. Gardner sold to Elisha R. Potter, for $15,000, the ferry farm consisting of twenty-nine acres on the north side of the road and seventy-six acres on the south side, with the buildings, wharves, ferry, ferry-boat *Hawk* and scow. If the *Hawk* was the same *Hawk* that John Franklin sold to Amos Gardner in 1773 she must have been a remarkably good boat to last forty-six years. Elisha R. Potter was a prominent man in South Kingstown and was elected representative to congress in 1796, 1808, 1810 and 1812. When Potter purchased the ferry, Gardner was to remain in possession until March, 1822, presumably to operate it, but at the end of two years he decided not to live at the ferry farm any longer and Potter took possession. The executrix of the estate of Peleg Gardner brought action to subject the purchase money of the ferry estate to the payment of the testators' debts and the ferry property was thus again in litigation for a long time. It was said that the executrix moved to Connecticut so as to get the case into the federal courts. The decision in the circuit court was against Potter who took the case to the United States Supreme Court. Potter prepared a brief which was presented to the court by a Mr. Pearce in February, 1831. A decision in favor of Potter was handed down by Chief Justice Marshall. By his will, dated 8 September, 1835, Potter left to his son James B. M. Potter all the South Ferry estate, the ferry-boat, one half of the freight boat and all other appurtenances. When Benjamin Cottrell leased the ferry we do not know, but in the report of the ferry committee in 1830 it is called Cottrell's Ferry and Cottrell was certainly the lessee up to 1842 and probably until 1847.

Cottrell paid $500 a year rental, which apparently did not include the farm, but did include the ferry-boat. He also hired half the freight boat. The latter was a sloop called the *South Kingstown*. The accounts of the ferry, including all the bills for the maintenance of the ferry-boat and wharf, as well as of the sloop, for the years 1839 to 1842 were preserved by James B. M. Potter and are now in the possession of William Davis Miller. These accounts show many interesting details of prices of goods and labor and have already been referred to.

Cottrell probably gave up his lease of the ferry at the time he bought his farm in Jamestown in September, 1847. Who next operated the ferry we do not know. Benjamin S. Hazard hired the ferry and the farm from Potter about 1858 for which he paid an annual rental of $1,000. He kept it until the place was sold to Joseph Eaton, Jr. The old stone house is still there and was built for a hotel and was kept as such by Hazard. It was built by James B. M. Potter and was called the Narragansett House and he always kept a room in it for his own use. Hazard employed a man named Bill Caswell to sail the ferry-boat. "Bill" stammered and always wore a red shirt and was considered quite a character. Caswell also sailed the ferry-boat for Eaton for a number of years. There was an old man named Taylor who took the fares and looked after things about the landing. He could not read or write, but he never made a mistake in his money. James B. M. Potter and Joseph Eaton built a small cotton mill where jeans were manufactured during the Civil War, but the business proved unsuccessful. On 28 November, 1860, Potter mortgaged the ferry property, now consisting of 150 acres, to The Savings Bank of Newport. On 16 January, 1864, the Newport Savings Bank transferred the property to the Kingstown Savings Bank and Wakefield Institution for Savings. On 19 June, 1865, the above named banks sold the South Ferry estate to Joseph Eaton, Jr. The price paid was $24,500. The old



From a lithograph of the Narragansett House at the South Ferry, South Kingstown, 1850, owned by Mrs. E. G. Logan of Saunderstown. The ferry-boat is shown on the right. The larger boat is the freight sloop. The ancient ferry house is on the right of the road, near the wharf, bar-room on right. Narragansett House is on left.

fashioned sail ferry-boat ran on this ferry until the early seventies, when she became too old for further use. As the trade in live stock had, by that time, nearly ceased, a catboat, shown in the section on "Post Routes", was put on. J. Lester Eaton, now pilot commissioner, living in Saunderstown, sailed this boat and carried the mail in it for fourteen years, four times a week. On 10 August, 1886, the Eaton heirs sold the ferry estate to Edmund W. Davis.

After the steam ferry company purchased the *Conanicut*, the old *Jamestown* was put into service between Jamestown and the South Ferry, 7 July, 1888.

According to Captain Eaton the boat only ran to the South Ferry for a short time, for Stillman Saunders induced the company to change the terminus to Saunderstown. About a year afterwards Davis built a ferry slip, at a cost of $2,500, and the *Jamestown* returned to the South Ferry where she continued for some time. According to the advertisements in the Newport and Narragansett Pier newspapers, every summer the *Jamestown* was scheduled to run to the South Ferry until June 1895, when she was to run to Saunderstown, touching at the South Ferry. The next year the *Beaver Tail* was put on the service to Saunderstown and thereafter no mention is made of any boat to the South Ferry. In 1899 the *Beaver Tail* began to make twelve trips daily. This completes the history of the South Ferry and since then traffic has continued over the Saunderstown route.

SOUTH KINGSTOWN TO JAMESTOWN

GARDNER'S FERRY

Although the name is spelled with an "i" in "The Gardiners of Narragansett", in the early manuscript records and in the printed colonial records it was more commonly spelled Gardner. The family was numbered among the wealthy landed proprietors of the Narragansett country. In the early part of the eighteenth century William Gardner, son of Benoni, owned several hundred acres next south of the Smiths, on whose land the South Ferry was located. As has already been referred to, on 30 June, 1712, the general assembly, having found that some of the ferry keepers had failed to comply with the terms of the act establishing the ferries, withdrew the exclusive franchise of the Smiths and granted an equal franchise to William Gardner. It was also enacted that "Gardner and Smith have liberty to land their passengers at any place customary for ferry-boats to take off and land passengers". This probably enabled them to land their passengers at the regular ferry landings in Jamestown. Presumably William Gardner had a wharf on his own land in Narragansett. In October, 1713, John and Jeremiah Smith petitioned the general assembly that they again be given an exclusive franchise. On 24 February, 1714, it was enacted that the Smiths "complying with the committee (commissionated for the letting out said ferries) according to law, they shall have the whole privilege and benefit of said ferry, notwithstanding any grant or grants formerly made to William Gardner; and that the said Gardner forthwith desist carrying or transporting any passenger or passengers over the said ferry; any act or acts to the contrary here of, notwithstanding."

William Gardner died about 1732 and he left the easterly portion of his homestead farm called "Ye Middle Bonnet" to his son John. John Gardner, in February, 1747-8, complained bitterly of the management of the existing ferries and asked for a franchise which was granted him. Nothing more is heard of this ferry, and it is not likely that it was in operation very long, if at all. Capt. J. Lester Eaton says that, on the shore of the third lot south of the South Ferry, which would be the northern part of the land owned by William Gardner and his son John, there can be discerned what appears to be the remains of an old wharf. Perhaps this was the one used by the Gardners for their ferry-boats.

JAMESTOWN TO NORTH KINGSTOWN

This was commonly called the North Ferry, though it is possible that, for a short time, it was known as the West Ferry.

There is little doubt that the North Kingstown terminus of this ferry was always at the same place, namely, at the ferry landing on the Northup farm a short distance south of Plum Beach.

The landing place in Jamestown seems to have been shifted two or three times.

The first reference we have to this ferry is 28 May, 1707, when it was voted by the general assembly "that Mr. Ebenezer Slocum have privilege to keep a ferry on the west side of Conanicut Island, from the highway against the beach at Daniell's landing place, at Kingstown, on the same terms as other ferries are stated, for two years. The said Slocum, finding sufficient boats and wharves, and passage for travellers; and performing all other things imposed on other ferries in all respects."

We have found no evidence that this ferry was ever established, though very likely it was. It is extremely probable that, if established, it was maintained for only a very short time. Ebenezer Slocum died in 1715 and no mention is made in his will, or in his inventory, of a ferry, or a ferry-boat, though there was "a boate" valued at £5. Ebenezer Slocum owned a farm bounded west on the bay and south on the highway across the island, now called Eldred Avenue. In the various divisions of this land among the children of Ebenezer Slocum, until its sale to Thomas Hazard in 1783, no mention is made of a ferry.

Nevertheless, there has been a persistent tradition that an important ferry was here maintained for many years and it has been supposed that travelers crossed the island by this road and passed back and forth on another ferry between its eastern terminus and Coddington's Cove in Newport. Goodwin, in his notes to the history of the Narragansett church, says the church was built on the hill (MacSparran Hill) because it was expected that the road across from the North Ferry would bring much more traffic, diverting it from the South Ferry. There was a ferry he said, connecting the east side of Conanicut with Coddington's Cove. Dr. Goodwin, in a letter to us, just before his death, stated that these ferries and highways were discussed by him, at the dedication of the MacSparran Monument in 1869, with some of the oldest inhabitants who had always taken the greatest interest in local history. They showed him the remnants of the old road leading from the North Ferry past the church and thence to Kingstown Hill and Connecticut. Later he was able to follow the course of this road to Kingstown. He said that the old people spoke of the old ferry from the east end of Eldred Avenue, as if it was something that no one questioned. St. Paul's Church was built in 1707, the year in which Slocum asked for his ferry license. It may well be that the scheme of a competing ferry and highway to draw traffic from the established route further to the south soon came to naught, as has happened to many a similar venture.

Certain it is that a ferry was quite early established between the present ferry landing on the west side of Jamestown and North Kingstown. How early that was, we do not know, but it was surely before 1727. In the account of the ferry from Jamestown to South Kingstown we have shown that, previous to May, 1727, there had been at this landing place two ferries, one to South Kingstown and one to North Kingstown. It is not unlikely that the ferry from that point to North Kingstown was established in 1724, the same year in which Thomas and Nicholas Northup obtained their license for a ferry in the opposite direction.

That this ferry was maintained up to the time of the Revolution is probable. The two ferry landings and two boats are referred to in deeds of the property in 1736, 1744, 1747 and 1748, when they were purchased by the colony. As will be referred to in discussing the other side of the ferry, there was trouble in 1747 and 1748 because the proprietors of the Jamestown side of the ferry did not treat the North Kingstown ferrymen fairly. Up to this time the ferries from Jamestown to both North and South Kingstown had been owned by the same person. When, 25 October, 1750, the colony sold the ferries, Abel Franklin bought the South Ferry and Stephen Wilcox, the North Ferry. The North Ferry was sold to Benjamin Nichols in 1755 and by Nichols to George Franklin in 1759. George Franklin had received from his father Abel the South Ferry in 1758, so that the two properties were again united. In 1764 George Franklin left the North Ferry to his son Gershom and the South Ferry to his son John. In 1773 Gershom sold the North Ferry to his mother, Mary. During the Revolution the ferry wharves were destroyed by the British, or went to pieces, and, after the conflict, only one wharf, the south wharf, was rebuilt.

We have found no reference anywhere, after the Revolution, to a ferry from Jamestown to North Kingstown. If there was such, it may have used the wharf on the west side of Jamestown in common with the South Ferry, though it is possible that it may have had its wharf at another location, now to be mentioned.

It has already been shown that the North Ferry was maintained during the Revolution, at least for a part of the time. There was in early times a highway laid out across Conanicut Island, extending west from the north end of the beach in Potter's Cove. Its remnants have in recent times been called Weeden-Watson Lane. On the Blaskowitz Map of 1777 the west end of this lane is designated as the West Ferry. There is just one bit of corroborative evidence that there was once a ferry here. The heirs of Robert H. Watson, who owned much land along this road, in a division of their property in 1843, refer to it as the Ferry Road.

This evidence is very slight, but it suggests that this may have been the landing place of the North Ferry during the war.

Reference to the beginning of steam ferry transportation between Jamestown and North Kingstown (Saunderstown) is made in the account of the Ferries between Jamestown and South Kingstown.

NORTH KINGSTOWN TO JAMESTOWN

This was called the North Ferry and occasionally Northup's Ferry.

The summer cottage of the writers is situated within a few rods of the location of this ferry and we became interested to learn as much as possible about its history, and also about the one across the water on the opposite shore, the road to which we could plainly see stretching across Conanicut Island. Afterwards our interest extended to other Rhode Island ferries.

The ferry in the opposite direction was licensed in 1707, but the first we hear of this ferry was in 1724. At this time Thomas and Nicholas Northup, of North Kingstown, petitioned the general assembly for liberty to erect a ferry from North Kingstown to Jamestown "at the expiration of the present lease granted for the same." This petition has been lost, but 23 June, 1724, the petitioners were authorized to establish the ferry. The wording of this act "at the end and expiration of the present lease" suggests that a ferry was already in existence at that place. It may be, however, that this reference is merely to the ferry in the opposite direction, which was licensed in 1707, but which, however, we are not certain was ever in operation.

This ferry was located about one eighth of a mile south of Plum Beach, near the centre of the quarry, from which stone was taken for the Point Judith breakwater during the last years of the nineteenth century. The location of the wharf is marked by a heap of shells. From the franchise of the opposite ferry we learn that there was, near Plum Beach, in 1707, a landing place called Daniell's Landing. It is quite likely that this was the site of the ferry. There is no knowledge as to who the "Daniell" was whose name was attached to the landing, and we do not even know whether it was a given name, or a surname.

It would appear from the records that trouble very soon arose about the road to this ferry, for the following action was taken by the general assembly in 1731: "Whereas there was an act of Assembly, passed in June, in the year 1729, for the stopping of a drift way, which was laid out in North Kingstown, by the town council of said town, with a ferry, which is found prejudicial;—

Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly, that the aforesaid act be, and it is hereby repealed." Trouble about the road continued for over half a century.

The father of these Northups came from Providence with his father Stephen in 1671 to live near what is now known as Gilbert Stuart's Birthplace. The section known as Barbour's Heights, together with the land extending to Pettaquamscutt River and comprising about 660 acres was, in 1687, granted by King James II to Richard Wharton of Boston. This was known as the Middlefield Farm. Stephen Northup became a tenant on this farm and later purchased it, 20 October, 1710, of Richard Wharton's estate. It remained in the Northup family for over a century and a portion around the old ferry landing was sold by Thurston Northup to Wilbur Hazard in 1847 and the writers purchased their lot from his son, Wilbur Hazard.

Thomas Northup had lived in Jamestown for several years, where he was associated with ferry owners and ferrymen. There is little doubt that he and his brother Stephen established the ferry as provided in the act. In October 1730 Thomas Northup received pay from the colony for doing quarantine service against smallpox, a duty frequently placed upon ferrymen. On 12 February, 1731, Stephen Northup deeded to his sons, Thomas and Nicholas, a large tract of land, including the ferry wharf and pier, with driftway from the ferry through his other land. Stephen Northup died in 1733. On 13 January, 1731-2, Thomas and Nicholas Northup signed an agreement about the ferry. It was to go into effect 8 * * * 1732-3 and to continue for seven years. (The North Kingstown Records were burned, so that many words near the margins of the pages are illegible, as in the case of the date just given.) Thomas had previously held the lease of the ferry, but now Nicholas was to have it and to operate the ferry until the expiration of the agreement. As is elsewhere referred to, the advertisement of a book, printed in 1732, states that it was to be sold by Thomas Northup, ferryman, at Boston Neck. This is in accord with Thomas' statement that he held the lease of the ferry at that time. That Nicholas had the ferry in 1737 is shown by the fact that in November of that year Nicholas Northup, of North Kingstown, together with other ferrymen, signed a petition to the general assembly for an increase in the rates of ferriage. In 1746 trouble arose over the driftway to this ferry which had been laid out by Stephen Northup. In August of that year Edward Gardner of North Kingstown, ferryman, in a petition, alleges that the driftway from the North Ferry to David Greene's was obstructed by fences. David Greene at that time owned Bissell's Mill, where the village of Hamilton is now located. Gardner was evidently the boatman, for Nicholas Northup still continued to own the ferry. In the following April the town council presented a similar petition. A committee was appointed which made a report that it was unable to lay out the highway owing to opposition. Another report was made in which it was stated that Nicholas Northup had taken back his gift of a highway and the committee did not know what to do. A plat of the proposed highway and also of the ferry landing is attached to the report. In 1747 Northup had apparently sublet his ferry to Stephen Wilcox, for, February 29, they both petitioned the general assembly, claiming that John Martin, who had the ferry in the opposite direction, had refused to run his boat to their wharf in North Kingstown. Northup asked for authority to set up a ferry in Jamestown to compete with Martin and this was granted, but apparently he did not set up the ferry, for 13 June, 1748, Northup's neighbor, Rouse Helme, complained to the general assembly that there was no boat coming from Jamestown to North Kingstown. On 22 April, 1762, the ferry committee reported that it had leased one of the ferries to Nicholas Northup, but it was not stated which one. Again in February, 1753, Nicholas Northup was reported as the lessee of a ferry.

Nicholas Northup had a son, Gideon, who had, 26 September, 1751, married Avis Slocum, granddaughter of the first ferryman on the opposite shore. Apparently Nicholas allowed his son to operate the ferry, for in 1756 we find his name on a petition asking for an increase in the rates of ferriage. The will of Nicholas Northup, dated 14 October, 1756, is recorded in North Kingstown, but the page is quite imperfect. It appears, however, that he left to his well beloved son a house and the ferry-boat and wharf and other things belonging to the ferry. In January, 1776, Gideon Northup was paid £1.7.4 for ferrying and billeting soldiers and keeping sheep. The service must have been performed when the sheep and cattle were removed from the islands in the summer of 1775. The scene of a story called the "Young Minute Man" is laid at the North Ferry and the principal character in it is William, the young son of Gideon Northup, who did the most wonderful things, as boys in story books always do. During the Revolution the South Ferry was not in operation, but the North Ferry was, at least for a part of the time. Anderson's Almanack for 1775-1776 describes the western route to East Greenwich and Providence as passing over the North Ferry and the tavern keeper was called Northup. The ferry-boat was, however, captured by the British in December, 1776, and was run aground near the ferry and the enemy were driven off by the Americans. In June, 1779, a petition was presented to the general assembly which alleged that the road from the North Ferry to the country road had been closed and a committee was asked to open it. This was appointed. From the mutilated North Kingstown records it appears that Gideon Northup had a son, Thurston, who owned sixteen acres with buildings on the shore. This was doubtless the ferry property. In 1784 Gideon sold eight acres to another son, Samuel, through which ran the road to the ferry.

Peleg C. Pierce was greatly interested in the history and antiquities of North Kingstown and he wrote an account of the town in "The History of Washington and Kent Counties". He also made copious extracts from the records of North Kingstown. These are deposited with the Rhode Island Historical Society. Records, probably from the town council, refer to the North Ferry in 1810 and 1811. Pierce, writing in 1888, says that the ferry wharf was badly damaged by the September gale of 1815 and that the ferry was then abandoned. Wilbur Hazard pointed out to us the location of the wharf.

The Narragansett Transportation Company

Stillman Saunders was a successful ship-builder at Saunderstown. His father, John A. Saunders, had been a shipbuilder before him. Saunders was dissatisfied with the management of the ferry company and he believed that with better service the traffic could be increased. Saunders had, 25 October, 1904, made a contract with the Jamestown and Newport Ferry Company to land its boats at his ferry slip until June 1915, for $200 per year. The ferry company believed that it had obtained an exclusive right, though it would not so appear from a casual reading of the contract, and it proceeded to construct a bridge and float at its own expense. Under a charter granted 6 March, 1906, Stillman Saunders, Louise D. L. Saunders and S. Anna Gould, organized the Narragansett Transportation Company to do a ferry business between Saunderstown, Jamestown and Newport. About 1 July, 1906, this company put on a boat between Saunderstown and Jamestown. The old company applied for an injunction to prevent Saunder's boat from using the ferry slip above referred to, but it was not granted.

The Narragansett Transportation Company ultimately owned four ferry-boats, the *West Side,* the *John A. Saunders,* the *Narragansett* and the *Newport.* They were all built at Saunderstown. The *West Side* is shown in an illustration in the history of Tripps Ferry. In the winter time the company often used only a small launch. The Narragansett Transportation Company built a ferry slip in Jamestown on the west side of the island just north of the landing of the other company. On the east side of the island a shore lot was purchased just north of Narragansett Avenue and a ferry slip was also constructed there. The ferry landing in Newport was first at Lopez Wharf, or, as it was sometimes called, Finch and Engs Wharf, which now forms a part of the Government Landing. In a short time the ferry landing was changed to a slip just north of Commercial Wharf. The boats also stopped at the wharf of the Fall River Line to make connection for passengers for New York and the company operated a baggage express across Conanicut Island.

This company operated its boats for several years, but was unsuccessful and, 16 March, 1911, through its President, Ernest L. Caswell, transferred its real estate in Jamestown to Philip Allen as trustee and, on the same date, all of the property of the company, except the ferry-boat *Newport*, was purchased by the Jamestown and Newport Ferry Company.

WESTERLY TO PAWCATUCK

The William Clark Thread Mills are situated in the village of Pawcatuck in the town of Stonington, Conn., on the Pawcatuck River, opposite the village of Westerly. A great many of the employees of the mill live in Westerly, more formerly than now. To convey these people and also others who wished to cross the river, Joseph Ozane, for some time previous to 1900, had operated a ferry, using large flat-bottom boats. Just before this time the bridge across the Connecticut River was out of commission and a small side wheel ferry-boat named the *Cora* had been used to accommodate the traffic. After the bridge was re-opened and the *Cora* was no longer needed, she was purchased by William B. Green to use on the Pawcatuck River as a ferry-boat. Green and Ozane united their forces and, 16 April, 1900, started the little *Cora* on her regular trips between the two states. In about three weeks Green withdrew from the enterprise and Ozane immediately took the steam engine and paddle wheels out of the boat. The distance from the thread mill over to the foot of Clark Street in Westerly is about 450 feet. Across this space Ozane stretched a chain so that it lay upon the bed of the river. This chain ran over a sprocket wheel on the *Cora* which was provided with a gasoline engine. The revolutions of the wheel propelled the boat back and forth across the river. The fare was three cents. In the winter, at times, the river was so solidly frozen that it was impossible to operate the ferry. This chain ferry continued for just five years, until Ozane's license expired. He then hauled up the boat on the Connecticut shore and has since used her as a landing place for his flat-bottom boats, to which he returned and which have proved sufficient to accommodate the diminishing traffic across the river. The automobile, which is the chief source of revenue for the Rhode Island steam ferries, has reduced the traffic of this ferry across the Pawcatuck to almost zero.

Practically all the information given above was obtained for us by Everett Barns of Westerly. There is an article in the *Providence Journal,* 22 May, 1904, describing this ferry and there is also a picture of the boat.

Stonington to Watch Hill

This ferry was established in 1875 by Henry L. Ripley of Stonington who was, a few years later, joined in the business by Captain Joseph S. Ripley, who is the source of most of our information. The first boat was the *Edith Peck* followed by the *Watch Hill* in 1879 or 1880. The boats used the Larkin Wharf in Watch Hill and the Watch Hill Wharf in Stonington, close by the railroad station. Most of the time the boat made eight round trips a day. The fare was twenty-five cents.

In 1904 Captain Ripley sold the *Watch Hill* to H. Hobart Babcock of Westerly. In the spring of 1915 Babcock sold the ferry to J. Irving Maxson. The ferry became unprofitable and was discontinued in 1918.

According to Rowse Babcock of White Marsh, Penn. the *Watch Hill* was at first a steamboat, but, owing to the stringent government regulations for steam vessels carrying passengers, the power was, in the spring of 1913, changed to gasoline, two thirty-seven and one half h. p. engines of this type being installed.

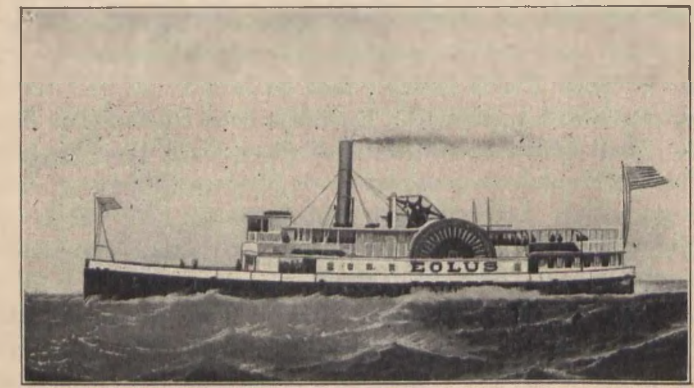
WICKFORD TO NEWPORT

WICKFORD LINE

Some might think that this ought not to be considered a ferry, but it is so clearly an extension of the railroad from New York that there is excellent reason for including it in a list of Rhode Island ferries. The boats have always run in connection with trains and it has never been an excursion line. In colonial days the main route of travel from New England to New York and the south was over Narragansett Ferry. The advent of the railroad made this ferry of little value for through travel and the circuitous journey through Providence hindered the development of Newport.

Among the schemes proposed for a better route was a steamboat line from Newport to Wickford with a rail connection to the main line. The Wickford Branch Railroad Company was chartered in May, 1864. The name was changed in January, 1870, to the Newport and Wickford Railroad and Steamboat Company. The city of Newport subscribed for $50,000 of the capital stock. The construction of the line proceeded rather slowly and pending its completion the steamer *Eolus*, during the summer of 1870, carried passengers from Bannister's wharf in Newport to East Greenwich to connect with the trains at that point. The boat was taken off for the winter, October 8. The route through Wickford was probably opened about the last of June 1871. At any rate, it is reported that, on July 1, the *Eolus* carried 140 passengers bound from New York to Newport. Two weeks later it was stated that the new line was doing as well as could be expected. An interesting account of the early history of this ferry may be found in the

Providence Sunday Journal, 8 April, 1923. In the spring of 1872 the landing place in Newport was removed to Commercial Wharf, where it remained until after the line was absorbed by the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company, when it was removed to Long Wharf, 1 April, 1910. The *Eolus* continued to run until May, 1892, when the steamer *Tockwogh* took her place. This boat was 166 feet long and cost $60,000 and was built in Baltimore in 1889. She was burned at her wharf in Wickford 11 April, 1893, and the *Whatcheer* temporarily took her place. In June the steamer *General* was purchased and put on the route where she has continued to run for over thirty years.



First boat on the Wickford Line.

With the development of automobile travel, traffic over this route began to decline and has continued to do so, the business having gone back to the Narragansett, Jamestown and Newport Ferries. Even before the advent of the automobile the line was operated at a loss, although it received nearly one half of the through passenger rate between Newport and New York. The property was sold, 1 November, 1909, under foreclosure, to the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company, except the steamboat *General,* which was purchased by the New England Navigation Company. The latter in turn, 1 July, 1912, sold the *General* to the New England Steamship Company. It was only at the earnest solicitation of the citizens of Newport and other communities that the New Haven road consented to purchase the property. Finally the route became so unprofitable that it was determined to abandon it and the *General* made what was supposed to be her last trip 23 September, 1922, but in the winter of 1923 the city of Newport obtained legislation which permitted it to exempt the line from taxation for a period of two years. This made a saving for the company of $10,000 a year and, as a consequence, it operated the *General* during the summers of 1923 and 1924, and also in 1925.

WARWICK NECK TO PRUDENCE ISLAND

The reasons for establishing a route from Newport to Providence over Prudence Island were referred to in the account of Lawton's Ferry, being set forth in the petition of John Lawton and Barlo Greene in 1742. This route required a ferry between the Island of Rhode Island and the lower end of Prudence and another between the upper end of Prudence and Warwick Neck. Though these ferries were not established until 1742 an attempt was made nearly twenty years earlier to open this route. Though there is no evidence that the ferry was then established, the general assembly, 23 June, 1724, took the following action: "Upon the Petition and Prayer of Hezekiah Gorton of Warwick for Liberty to keep a ferry from Warwick Neck to the North end of Prudence Island—it is Voted & enacted that the said Petitioner shall have all due and proper encouragement to under take and carry on said Ferry provided their be a good and sufficient way laid out through Prudence Island and that the other part of the Ferry proposed be kept with boats agreeable".

The first reference we have found to the actual operation of this ferry is in a petition to the general assembly in 1746 by Thomas Wickes and many others of Warwick complaining about the manner in which Hezekiah Gorton managed the ferry between Warwick Neck and Pleasant Point on Prudence Island. It was stated that the bad management of this ferry had caused the other ferry to stagnate also. By this, of course, was meant the ferry from Prudence Island to the Island of Rhode Island. Complaint was made that Gorton overcharged, that his boat was often out of the way and, particularly, that he had no house near the ferry. The petitioners urged that Gorton be compelled to keep the ferry properly and to build a house near the pier, or else that a license be granted to Mr. Thomas Wickes of Warwick, the son of John, who owned land directly across the highway from Gorton. The petition was referred to the next session and Gorton was summoned to appear. No record has been found of further proceedings, but it seems likely that Gorton lost his license, though it probably was not granted to Wickes.

Hezekiah Gorton was a grandson of the first Samuel Gorton and died in 1748. In the inventory of his estate, 10 April, 1749, there is no mention of a boat and nothing about the ferry in the account presented by the administrator. The administrator was Samuel Gorton, presumably brother of Hezekiah, who lived in Swansea and who made a charge for "boating goods" from that town. Apparently this Samuel had obtained possession of the ferry property previous to Hezekiah's death, perhaps at the time when the management of the ferry was under consideration by the general assembly. In any event, 13 April, 1747, Samuel Gorton of Swansea sold to Joseph Nichols of Middletown a piece of land in Warwick Neck containing about seven or eight acres, bounded north on the land of Benjamin Greene, east on the salt water, south and west on a highway together with the ferry pier, commonly called Gorton's Todd's meadow. On 11 May, 1747, Thomas Wickes, son of John of Warwick, sold to Joseph Nichols forty-four rods of land at the end of the neck on the easterly side thereof adjoining the salt water and near a place called Gorton Todd's meadow. This lot was bounded north eleven rods on a highway running to the south of said meadow. This was evidently a portion of the land which Thomas Wickes in his petition stated that he owned, across the highway from Gorton. Who actually operated the ferry we do not know, but that the management was successful, is shown by a petition to the general assembly in September, 1747. This petition asks for a grant to repair the bridge at Pawtuxet "there being much more recours here than formerly * * * since the Ferry at Warwick etc has been Ply'd". On 3 February 1748 Joseph Nichols for £3,000, old tenor, sold to John Wall, of West Greenwich, his mansion house and lot in Warwick Neck, which was the small lot purchased of Thomas Wickes, and also the eight acre lot with ferry, pier and buildings. Apparently the "mansion house" was the ferry house which had been petitioned for by the inhabitants.

Probably John Wall soon removed from West Greenwich to Warwick and became ferryman. At least he was called such on 26 July, 1749, when he purchased a small piece of land near his dwelling house. On 24 June, 1751, John and Patience Wall of Warwick sold to John Brown their land as described in the preceding purchases and also the ferry-boat, with rigging, sail, mast, boom and appurtenances. The next reference to the ferry is found in the regulation of ferry rates in 1752 where it is called Warwick Ferry. On 18 March, 1757, John and Jane Brown of Newport sold to Benjamin Greene of East Greenwich a dwelling house in Warwick Neck south of the road to the ferry and eight acres on the north of the road and bounded north on the land of Governor Greene, and the stable, pier and ferry to the same belonging.

This is the last reference we have found to this ferry, but it is probable that it was in operation up to the time of the Revolution.

It appears from the above mentioned deeds that the ferry was located near the end of Warwick Neck upon land which finally came into the possession of Benjamin Greene. It then descended to his son William, who, at the time of his death, owned the larger part of Warwick Neck. The old house built by William Greene, or by Benjamin Greene, finally descended to Crawford A. Nightingale. It was burned a few years ago and Nightingale's present house was built on its site. A little to the southeast of the boat house, standing in the water, just awash at low tide, is a rock which has always been known as Todd's Meadow Rock. William G. Nightingale tells us that the lot between his brother's house and the lighthouse, off which the rock stands, has been known as Todd's Meadow. It appears then, that the ferry landing must have been near the Nightingale's boat house.

Prudence Island to Warwick Neck

We do not certainly know that there was such a ferry, though it is difficult to understand how through traffic between Providence and Newport could be successful without a mate boat on the Prudence side to operate in conjunction with the Warwick ferry. As was shown in the account of the last named ferry, its landing place on the Prudence side was at Pleasant Point, but where that was, we have been unable to learn. The most favorable place for a landing would seem to have been in the quiet waters between Prudence and Patience Islands. On the DesBarres map of the bay, 1776, is shown a wharf on Prudence where the wharf now stands in the cove between the islands. Charles E. Allen of Attleboro, who has given much attention to the genealogy of the Allen family, as well as to the early history of Prudence Island, thinks that the landing was further south, in Sheep Pen Cove, nearer the residence of Thomas Allen who, he says, was called boatman in an ancient deed and who he suspects was keeper of the ferry.

Oakland Beach to Buttonwoods

An examination of the advertisements of Oakland Beach and Buttonwoods in the daily newspapers during the early part of the summer of 1875 reveals the following. "A regular ferry will run between Oakland Beach and the grounds of the Buttonwoods Association for the accommodation of passengers by steamboats or cars." The Warwick Railroad was extended to Oakland Beach that summer, and doubtless the ferry was projected in order to give the residents of Buttonwoods other means of communication with Providence than the horse cars which ran to Apponaug. It would also permit Buttonwoods people to take part in the amusements and clam dinners at the recently opened shore resort at Oakland Beach. Charles H. Richards of Providence recalls going over this ferry when a boy. It was a row-boat ferry operating across Buttonwoods Cove.

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